

Preached at our Church
SERMON

Against the

ANTI-SCRIPTURISTS.

ALSO

Another concerning the
Sinfulness, Danger, and Remedies

OF

INFIDELITY.

Preached at

WHITE-HALL.

BY

SETH Lord Bishop of *Sarum.*

LONDON,

Printed by J. M. for James Collins, at the
Kings-Head in Westminster-Hall,
MDC LXX.

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February 20. 16⁶⁹₇₀.

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2 Tim. 3. 16.

All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God.

IN the *verse* preceding, it is said concerning the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*, that they are *able* to make a man wise unto salvation, *διὰ πίστεως ἡμετέρας ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ* (by the faith which is in Jesus Christ) : And it follows immediately, *All scripture, &c.*

ἡ πίστις (the Faith) is often by a Metonymy taken for the *Gospel*, which is the *Object* of the *Faith* of Christians. We read often of the ^a *Preaching*, and ^b *Hearing* of Faith ; ^c of the *Analogue* of Faith, ^d the *common Faith* ^e which was once delivered ^f to the *Saints* (in the *preaching* of ^g *Christ*, and the *Writings* of his *Evangelists* and *Apostles*) and so I conceive it is to be taken in this place.

Against the

So that the *meaning* of the *whole* is this, The *Old Testament* understood and *expounded* according to the *Analogy* of the *New*, is able to make a man *wise*. And the *Pen-men* of the *Canonical Books* of the *Old Testament* (wherein *Timothy* had been instructed ~~in~~ *Scriptures*) and of the *Books* of the *New Testament* (which except those of *S. John* were extant before the writing of this *Epistle*) were *inspired* and *directed* by the *spirit* of *God*.

The *words* of the *Text* are an *entire Proposition*, asserting the *Divine Authority* of the *Canon* of *Scripture*; and my *endeavour* shall be at this time to *prove* the *truth* of that *Proposition*. Wherein, that I may proceed with all *plainness* and *clearness*, I shall premise two words by way of *Petition*,
{ *Precaution*.

1. *By way of Petition*, I *suppose* and *take* for granted;

1. The great *principle* of the *power* of *God*, and his *providence* in governing the world.
2. That our *Body* of *Canonical Books*

Books of the Old Testament, is the same with that which was in Use in the time of Christ and his Apostles, And our body of the New Testament the same which was anciently received in the Church. So that what shall be proved of those, is applicable to the Original Scripture used in our time.

3. *That those Books of New Testament whose Authors were not anciently questioned, were Written by those Authors whose Name they bear. And that those few others which were sometimes questioned by some particular Churches, and afterward Universally received, contain in them no one point of Faith or Minners dissentient from the Contents of those Books which were never questioned.*

2. *By way of Precaution and Admonition I must intreat you to take notice, that I shall not now meddle with*

the Controversies concerning *Apo-crypha, Translations, Keri and Chetib, Hebrew points, various Lecti- ons, dubious Authors* or parts of Scripture.

But my endeavour at this time shall be to *Affert* the *Divine Authority* of the *body* and *substance* of the *Original Books* of the *Canon* of the *Old* and *New Testament*: And this not in the way of *common place*, but in a particular *Examination* or *Refutation* of the most dangerous *Opinions* of the *Anti-scripturists*, which are these.

I. Of those who pretend to believe the *truth* of the *New Testament*, and yet they deny the *Divine Authority* of the *Old*.

II. Of those who pretend to believe the *truth*, but deny the *divine Authority* of the *New Testament*.

III. Of such as pretend to believe *matters of fact* to have been truly *re-lated* in the *New Testament*, but do not believe the *truth* of the *Doctrinal* parts relating to *Faith* and *Man-ners*.

IV. Such as *deny* the *truth* of the *Relation* of *matters of Fact* in the
New

New Testament, and in consequence reject the whole Body of Scripture. Of these as briefly and plainly as I can.

I. The first Opinion is of those, who pretending to believe the Truth of the New Testament, deny the Divine Authority of the Old Testament. The Severians, and the Manichees, Basilides, and Carpocrates of old: The Catapaptists of later times, some Anabaptists, Antinogians, and other Fanatical Sectaries amongst our selves.

In opposition to these, I shall shew, that supposing the truth of the New Testament, the Divine Authority of the Old Testament is to be acknowledged: Because the Divine Authority of the Old Testament is asserted by Christ and his Evangelists and Apostles in the New.

I. Next to the Redemption of the world, the great business which Christ had to do upon Earth, was to convince men that he was the *Messias*, and so to assert his Legislative Authority. And the great Argument which he used

used for the conviction of the world was this.

All the *Marks* and the entire *Character* of the Messiah, and of his *Actions* and *Passions*, were *prefigured* and *foretold* by the *Law* and the *Prophets*, and the *Psalms*, i. e. in the *Volume* of the *Old Testament*.

And *all things* foretold or prefigured concerning the Messiah, were accomplished by *himself*.

So that though the *great Works* of Christ, and the *purity* and excellency of his *Doctrine*, and of his *Life* were of themselves *sufficient* to *justify* the Introduction of his *Law* into the World, yet he was pleased to resolve (as it were) his own Authority into the *Divine Authority* of the Old Testament, and to make use of those other manifestations of himself, in a coordination with that principle.

And *therefore* we find him still *pressing* the *Jews* with this, *that* if they did *believe* the *Writings* of *Moses*, and their other Scriptures, they must of necessity believe *him* also.

Joh. 5. 46. *Moses* wrote of me (saith he) where-

wherefore, did ye believe *Moses*, ye would believe *me*. The *Scriptures* testify of me, therefore search them diligently, *ἑρευνᾶτε τὰς γραφάς*. For the attaining of everlasting life he refers the Lawyer to the Law, *What is written in the Law? how readest thou?* For the avoiding of the place of torments, he makes Abraham refer the Relations of Dives to *Moses* and the Prophets.

Joh. 5. 39.

Luk. 10. 26

Luk. 16. 29

In all his Disputations with the Pharisees and Sadduces, the Lawyers and the Scribes, he makes his appeal to the *Scriptures* of the Old Testament. And lest any one should think that in all this he did only argue *ad homines* (that disputing with the Jews he only proceeded upon their own Hypothesis) we find him in the course of his Ministration positively asserting, that the *Scriptures* must be fulfilled; that they cannot be broken; that he came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfill them; and that Heaven and Earth shall pass away, before one jot or tittle of these should perish, until all

Mar. 14. 49

Joh. 10. 35

Mar. 3. 31.

Mar. 5. 18.

was

was fulfilled. Thus he asserted the Authority of the Old Testament before his death.

And after his *Resurrection* he made a real demonstration that the Old Testament was given by inspiration of God; for *on the day* of his Resurrection, falling into company of two of his Disciples, going to *Emmaus*: He began at *Moses* and all the *Prophets*, and expounded to them *in all the Scriptures* the things concerning himself.

And afterward when the Eleven were come together, as a *recapitulation of this his method*, and that he might instruct his Disciples in it, he said unto them, *These were the words* 44. *which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms (in the Volume of Old Testament) concerning me.* He opened their understandings, and said, *thus it is written, and thus it behoved*: And as a short Idea of what they were to do, he tells them, and

and ye are *Witnesses* of these things.

2. *In pursuance* of this method we find the *Evangelists* very curious, and very frequent in observing the accomplishment of the Prescriptions of the Old Testament, reciting sometimes the speeches of Christ, saying, that he did such, or such a thing, to the end that the Scriptures might be fulfilled: *I will not eat of the fruit of the Vine till all things be fulfilled.*

Sometimes in their *own Persons* observing the accomplishment of particulars, and noting either *particular portions* of Scriptures which were fulfilled, or the fulfilling of the *Scriptures cited at large*, without any particular Quotation. Thus the Evangelists writing of the ^aConcepti-^b ^cMat. 1. 22, ^don, ^eNativity, ^fName of Christ, ^gof ^hMat. 2. 15, his coming out of *Egypt*, ⁱdwelling at ^jMat. 2. 23, *Nazareth*, ^kmigration to *Capernaum*, ^l4. 14, ^mriding to *Jerusalem*: Say that these ⁿ21. 4. things were done that the *Scriptures* (or the *saying* of the *Prophet*) at *large* might be fulfilled: So likewise for the circumstances of his *Passion*,
the

¹Mat. 26.
^{56.} the ^h flight of his Disciples, ⁱ casting
¹27. 35. lots upon his Garments, ^k Vinegar gi-
^{Joh. 19. 24} ven him to drink, ^l piercing his side,
¹Joh. 19.
^{29.} ^m bones remaining unbroken, &c.
¹ 37. *Other times* they note the *particu-*
² 36. *lar Prophet*, Christ ⁿ healed Diseases,
¹Mat. 8. 17. ^o poke in Parables, and that the say-
¹Mat. 13. ing of *Isaiah* the Prophet might be
^{15.} fulfilled. ^p When *Herod* slew the
¹Mat. 2. 17 Children, then was fulfilled that
 which was spoken by *Jeremy* the
 Prophet, *Rachel weeping for her Chil-*
dren, &c. and once we find a quota-
 tion of the second Psalm, and the
 like : *This for the Evangelists.*

3. *Lastly*, the Divine Authority
 of the Old Testament is asserted by
 the *Apostles*: Whom we find every
 where in their Writings, *citing* the
 Testimonies of the ¹ *Lay* and the
¹Gal. 3. 10 *Prophets*, and the ¹ *Psalms*; appealing
¹Ast. 7. 42. to them, ¹ what saith the Scripture?
¹Ast. 1. 28. & 13. 33. ¹ the Scripture hath concluded *so* or
¹Rom. 4. 2. ¹ *so*: *Arguing* out of them, oft times
¹Gal. 3. 22. *directly*; thus not only the Apostles
¹Ast. 18. but ¹ *Apollos* mightily convinced the
^{24. 28.} Jews, sometimes *ab absurdo*, ¹ do ye
¹Jam. 4. 5. *think* the Scripture speaks in vain?

In a word, the Apostles followed the way and method which their Master taught them; they asserted that the Gospel was ^apromised by the Prophets, ^aRom. 1. 12 ^bwitnessed by the Law and the Pro- ^bRom. 3. 21 ^cphets: ^cby all the Prophets. Affirm- ^cAct. 13. 18. & 10. ing of themselves, that they believed ^{43.} ^dall things written in the Law and in ^dAct. 24. 14. the Prophets: and that they continu- ^eAct. 26. 22. ed testifying and saying ^eno other things than the Prophets and Moses did say should come.

Finally, lest any place should be left for doubting concerning any part of the Old Testament, the Apostles have expressly asserted concerning the ^fLaw, that it is holy, just, and good; ^fRom. 7. 12. ^gthat the Prophets are holy, and ^gthe ^gAct. 3. 21. ^hScriptures holy; that they are the ^hTim. 3. 15. ⁱOracles of God, ^klively Oracles; that ⁱRom. 3. 2. ^kGod spake by the Prophets; ^mthat ^kAct. 7. 38 ^lholy men of God spake as they were ^m2 Pet. 1. 21. moved by the Holy Ghost. Lastly, ^{21.} (in the Text) that the ⁿισαακ γενημας, ⁿ2 Tim 3. 15. wherein Timothy had been instituted by his Mother, were given by inspiration of God.

This is the sense of the New Testa-
ment

ment concerning the *Old Testament*; supposing therefore the *Truth* of the *New Testament*, the *Divine Authority* of the *Old Testament* is to be acknowledged, contrary to the first Opinion of the Anti-scripturists.

II. The Second *Anti-scriptural* Opinion is of those who pretend to believe the *Truth*, but they deny or doubt the *Divine Authority* of the *New Testament*, either of the whole body of the *New Testament*, or at least of that part which delivers the *Speeches and Writings* of the *Apostles*.

Of this sort there are said to be many, who by the power and influence of their *Education* are restrained from denying or disbelieving the *Truth* of the *New Testament*, and yet through the infelicity of corrupt conversation are fallen from that *Veneration* which is due to writings supposed to be of *Divine Authority*.

For the *History* of the *New Testament* they have the same respect which they have for *Tacitus* or *Salust*, or some such other *History*; for the *Mystery*

slery of the Gospel, the same which they have for some parts of *Plato*, or remnants of *Pythagoras*. For the *practical parts*, the same which they have for some parts of *Cicero* or *Seneca*, or *Epicetus*. All which writings they believe to be *true*, but no man believes them to be *Divine*. And some there are who pretend a great *veneration* for the *speeches* of *Christ*, but have a *meaner esteem* for the *words*, and *writings* of the *Apostles*.

In *opposition* to these *Opinions*, I shall shew, that *supposing* the *words* of *Christ* and the *Apostles* to be *True*, it will follow, that they are to be esteemed to be of *Divine Authority*.

Because Christ and the Apostles did profess and declare, that what they delivered to the world, was of *Divine Authority*.

And *because our Lord Christ* did undertake not only for *himself*, but for the *Inspiration* of his *Apostles* also.

I. In the examination of the *next Opinion*, I shall be obliged to lay before you some of the *evidences* of *Divine Authority* in *Christ* and his

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Apostles, here it is *sufficient* to produce their *assertions* of it.

The *time* of our Lord Christs *ministration* (betwixt three and four years) was spent in *preaching* and *working*, and his *Authority* was often *questioned*.

* Mat. 21. In Luke 20. 1. and in the * paral-
23. lel places, *While he was in the Tem-*
Mar. 11. 27 *ple teaching the People, and preach-*
ing the Gospel, the Chief Priests and
the Scribes and the Elders came upon
him, saying, tell us by what Autho-
rity thou dost these things (preachest
to the people) and who gave thee
that Authority?

Knowing the perverseness of their minds, he was *not* pleased to *gratify* them at *that time* with a *direct* answer, but confounded them with a question concerning the Baptism of *John*.

But at Other times, upon Other occasions, we find the Divine Authority of his teaching abundantly declared and asserted by him.

* Joh. 14. 6 *I am the way, the truth and the*
* Joh. 6. 63 *life: The words which I speak unto*

yo

you they are *spirit*, and they are
life. * *The words which I speak* I^a Joh. 14.
 speak not of my *self*, but of the Fa- 10:
ther which dwelleth in me. d *My* Joh. 7. 16
Doctrine is not *mine*, but *his* that
sent me. * *I do nothing* of my *self*, Joh. 8. 28
 but as my *Father* hath taught me so
 I speak: f *I have* not spoken of my^e Joh. 12.
self, but the *Father* that *sent* me, he 49.
 gave me a *Commandment* what I
 should say, and what I should speak.
 g *Whatsoever* I speak therefore, even^e Joh. 12.
 as the *Father* said unto me, so I speak. 50.
 h *Heaven* and *Earth* shall pass away, h Mat. 24.
 but my *words* shall not pass away. 32.

Thus did our Saviour assert the
 Divine Authority of his Words.

2. And so likewise the Apostles are
 very frequent in asserting the Di-
 vine Authority of the things which
 they delivered.

In the 15. of the *Acts*, we find
 them assembled about the question of
Circumcision; and they accounted it
 no robbery to entitle their Decrees to
 the Holy Ghost, *It seemed good to*
the Holy Ghost, and to us, v. 18.

Nor do they pretend to revelation.
 B when

Against the

when gathered in *Council only*, but each one severally for himself.

S. Peter professes of *himself*, that he
 1 Pet. 5. 1 was a *partaker* of the *glory* which was
 revealed: And of his *Gospel*, that it
 1 Pet. 1. 5. was *revealed* from Heaven.

1 Joh. 1. 3. *S. John* declares that he had *κοινωνία*
 with the *Father* and the *Son*; as for
 his other writings, that they con-
 tained the things *which* he had
 1 Joh. 1. 1. heard and *seen* with his eyes, which
 he had looked on, and his hands had
 handled of the *Word of life*.

As for the *Apocalypse*, he professes,
 Apoc. 1. that being in the *spirit* in the *Isle of*
 9, 10. *Patmos* he received it, and was com-
 1 Ib. 19. manded to *write* it in a *Book*.

The greatest writer among the Apo-
 stles was *S. Paul*, and the greatest *Que-*
stion hath always been (amongst Un-
 believers) concerning his *Calling* and
 the *Authority* of his *Gospel*.

He *knew this very well*, and there-
 fore we find him asserting both his
Calling and his *Gospel* with abundant
 care and diligence.

He *affirms* himself to have been
 an

an Apostle not ^a of man, neither by ^a Gal. 1. 1. man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father; That by ^b God himself he ^b Rom. 1. 1. was separated to preach, constituted ² Tim. 1. 11 a Preacher, an Apostle, and a Defen- ^{Phil. 1. 17.} der of the Gospel. As concerning his Gospel, he professes to have ^c re- ^{Eph. 3. 1.} ceived it by Revelation of God.

*As for the Spirit wherewith he wrote and preached, he professed himself ^d ready to give a proof of Christ ^d 2 Cor. 13. speaking in him. He appealed to the ^{3.} Prophetick Spirit then in the Church, ^e 1 Cor. 14. ^{37.} *“ If any man think himself a Prophet or Spiritual, let him acknowledge the things which I write to be the Commandments of God.**

Out of this assurance it was that he enjoined his Epistles to be read in the Churches of ^f Coloss, & Laodicea, ^f Col. 4. 16. ^g Ibid. ^h Thessalonica, and ⁱ excommunicates ^h 2 Thes. such as should be disobedient in that ^{3. 14.} particular.

And lest any one should here repeat the Objection made against our Saviour, Thou bearest witness of thyself, thy witness is not true.

S. Paul speaking of *all the Apostles*,
 Eph 4. 11 affirms that God had ^a set them in the
 Church, and that ^b the Mystery of the
 Gospel was revealed to the holy Apo-
 stles by the Spirit.

Particularly, notwithstanding that
 dispute betwixt S. Peter and S. Paul
 (from the ^{*} first Ages of the Church
 to our own Times, objected by Un-
 believers to the prejudice of Religi-
 on) it is remarkable, that, in the same
 place where S. Paul gives an account
 how ^c Peter was to be blamed, and
 how and wherefore he withstood him to
 his face at Antioch, he doth expressly
 affirm, that the Gospel of the Circumci-
 sion was committed to Peter, and that
 God wrought effectually in Peter to
 the Apostleship of the Circumcision.

On the other side S. Peter, in that
 very place, where he may seem to
 complain of the ^d Δυσνόητα of S. Paul,
 yet even there he owns him as his be-
 loved Brother, acknowledges his Wis-
 dom to have been given him of God,
 and numbers all his Epistles, inter
 τὰς λοιπὰς γραφὰς, amongst the other
 Scriptures.

3. Lastly,

3. Lastly, for such as would put a difference of *degrees* betwixt the Authority of the *words* of *Christ*, and the *writings* and *Sermons* of the *Apostles*, they may take notice, that the *Authority* of *these*, resolves it self into the *veracity* of *Christ* himself.

He it was who being to leave the World, promised his Disciples again and again, that he would ^a send down upon them the *Holy Spirit*, that should ^b instruct them and teach them ^c all things, that should ^d Lead them into all truth, ^e Bring to their remembrance all things which he himself had spoken, that should ^f shew them things to come, that with this Spirit they should not be lightly dash'd, or sprinkled, but that they should be ^g Baptized, and as it were plunged into it.

Joh. 15.

26.

14. 26.

16. 13.

14. 26.

16. 13.

Act. 1. 5.

How all these *Promises* were performed, and how the *Affertions* of the Divine Authority of the Words of *Christ*, and the *Apostles* were proved to be true, I am next to shew. In the interim I conclude, that supposing the truth of the words of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, they are to be esteemed of Divine Authority.

B 4

III. The

III. The third Opinion is of such *ble*
 as *pretend* to believe *matters of fact* *Doc*
 to have been *truly related* in the *New Apo*
Testament, but they do not believe
 the *truth of the Doctrinal* parts re- cer
 lating to *Faith* or *Manners*. wor

Of these there have always been *Tru*
too great a number, not only *preten-* *Sor*
ders, who under a *form* of *Christia-* *I.*
nity deny the *power* thereof, but *ge-* *hat*
nerally all sorts of *Hereticks*. When *An*
Porphyrius had revolted from *Chri-* *the*
stianity to *Platonism*, and had bent *Wi*
 all his *Forces* against the *Scripture-*
History, he was *refuted* not only by *for*
Lactantius, and *Methodius*, men *am*
Orthodox in *Doctrine*, but by *Eusebius* *oth*
 and *Apollinaris*; and of late days, *(E*
Socinus and others have well asserted *to*
 the *truth* of the *Scripture-History* *lig*
 who yet have been *offended* at the *th*
dogmatical parts of the *Gospel*, and *Ep*
 concerning the *Faith* have made *ship-* *ni*
wrack. *Pa*

In *Opposition* to *these* I shall en-
 deavour to demonstrate, that, *Sup-*
posing *Matters of Fact* to be *truly related* *th*
 in the *New Testament*, it is *unreasona-*
ble

ble to suspect the *truth* of *any* of the
fact Doctrines delivered by *Christ* or his
New Apostles.

Amongst the various fancies con-
 cerning *Religion*, wherewith the whole
 world hath been always embroiled :
 Two things there are wherein all the
 Sons of *Adam* have agreed ; namely,
 1. That that is to be *believed* which
 hath received the *testimony* of *God*.
 And 2. That this *testimony* is to be ga-
 thered from instances of supernatural
Wisdom and *Power*.

In the study of *natural* and Philo-
 sophical *Theologie*, the *Speculativi*
 amongst the Greeks and Romans, and
 other Nations, sought after *Wisdom*,
 (*Reason*, and *Demonstration*. But)
 to reduce the People to the forms of re-
 ligious Rites and *Sacrifices* prescribed
 them, they were made to believe the
Epiphanies of the Gods, and the ma-
 nifestations of their *Wisdom*, and
Power, by *Oracles* and *Works* super-
 natural.

To these even *Mahomet* pretended
 though his great Argument was from
 the

the Sword : and of *the Jews* I need not speak.

For a *Foundation of Religion*, and in our *inquisition* after that, short of this *Testimony* we ought not to stay : further we cannot go : And herein is the utmost of humane wisdom to consider well those *Evidences* upon which we adventure the *interest* of our eternity.

To this evidence therefore we appeal in asserting the *Doctrine* of our Lord *Christ*, and his *Apostles* ; Namely to the instances of *Supernatural Knowledge* and *Supernatural Power* whereby their *Doctrine* was attested.

I shall not here wave the force, but I shall decline the repetition of what I have formerly spoken concerning the attestations given to it by *Visible Signs*, *Audible Voices*, *Apparitions of Angels*, *Fulfilling the Prophecies*, *Evidences of Christ's Resurrection*, *Mission of the Holy Ghost*.

In *Joh. 7. 15.* the *Jews* wondered at *Christ* that he knew any thing : How

knoweth this man *Letters*, seeing he never learned them? but if we mark the *Scriptures*, we shall find that he knew all things, and that nothing was withdrawn from the reach of his understanding.

He knew the *sickness* and death of *Lazarus*, though absent and at a distance; He saw *Nathaniel* under the *Fig-tree*, and convinced him that he was the Son of God, and the King of *Israel*: *Come see a man* (said the *Woman of Samaria*) which told me all things that ever I did, *is not this the Christ*?

He was *κασιγνήτης*: The secret *murmurs* at his hard sayings, the inward desires to ask him *Questions*; the *Reasonings* and *Dialogisms* of the hearts of his Disciples; the secret *Councils* of the Scribes and Pharisees, their evil surmisings, their treacherous intentions to intrap him, their *mental Blasphemy*, were all naked and manifest before him.

He knew what was in man, and needed not that any one should tell him;

him; ^a He *knew* the various *Kinds* of
^{21.} Devils, and how they were to be e-
 jected: *This Kind* cometh not out
 Mat. 17. 21 but by Prayer and Fasting. He *knew*
 Mat. 17. 27 the *Fishes* of the Sea, and *where* they
 were, and *what* was in them.

He *knew* not only things *past* and
 Joh. 18. 4 *present*, but *to come*; ^b He foresaw *all*
 11. 11. *things* that were to come upon him,
 13. 11. ^c *who it was* that should betray him,
 he foretold his Disciples *all the* cir-
 Mat. 20. cumstances of his *Passion*, ^d how he
 18. was to be *Betrayed*, ^e *Condemned*, ^f *de-*
 Mar. 10. *livered* to the Gentiles, ^g *mocked*,
 23. ^h *scourged*, *spit on*, *kill'd* and *Cru-*
 Mat. 16. *cified* at *Jerusalem*.
 21. Joh. 14. 28.

Behold, saith he, *I tell you before*;
 Luk. 19. ^h *Let this saying sink into your hearts*.
 44. He ⁱ forewarned *Peter* of his *denial*,
 Mat. 26. ^k and the *Disciples* of their *flight*.
 34. 31.

^l He foretold things to come *after*
 Luk. 21. *his death*, the *time* and *manner* of the
 20. destruction of *Jerusalem*: The *success*
 of his *Gospel*, the *Effect* (unlikely) of
 Joh. 12. his *Crucifixion*, ^m that it should draw
 32. all men after him, ⁿ that it should be
 Mat. 24. ^o preached and believed in the whole
 14. world

world ^a spreading it self like *Leaven*, ^a Mat. 13. 31.
 and like a grain of *Mustard-seed*,
 that *Satans* Kingdom should be de- ^b Luk. 10. 18.
 stroyed suddenly like *lightning*; not-
 withstanding the ^c false *Christs* and ^c Mat. 24. 25.
 false *Prophets* which should arise.

These and many more were in-
 stances of the supernatural knowledge
 of Christ: And for his power, the time
 would fail me to insist upon the many
 and various instances mentioned in
 the Gospels.

I shall omit the exercise of his do-
 minion over the Sun, Moon, and Stars,
 Plants, and Animals, Earth, and
 Water, the Wind and the Sea, and
 briefly mind you of those which con-
 cerned the bodies of men; how he
 1. Fed their hunger, 2. Healed their di-
 stempers, 3. Raised their dead, and ^a Mat. 14. 19.
 4. Cast out Devils. ^b 15. 36.

He fed ^a 4000 at one time, and ^c Mat. 15. 30.
^b 5000 at another, with 5 or 7 Loaves,
 and a few little Fishes. ^{9.} 27.

He healed the ^c blind, ^d lame, ^e deaf, ^h Mat. 8. 14
^f dumb, ^g maimed, ^h feverish, ⁱ hydro- ⁱ Mar. 14. 4
^k paralytic, ^l leprons, and ^m luna- ^k Mat. 4. 13
 tick ^l Mar. 17. 12.
^m Mat 4. 23

tick persons. He cured not ^a green com
^a Luk. 22. wounds only, but ancient inveterate ly
^{51.} ^b Mat. 9. 20 *Maladies* of ^b 12, of ^c 38 years conti del
^c Joh. 5. 5. nuance, *one* that was *born blind*.

He used no *Plasters* nor *Potions*, nor the
Telefmans or other *Charms*, but per cast
^a *Multos.* formed all these things by a ^a *touc* dal
^b Mat. 9. 20 of his *Hand* or of his ^c *Garment*. He cer
^c Mat. 8. 6. healed ^f *absent* persons as well as *pre* Gao
^d Joh. 5. 5. *sent*, ^g he *speke* the word only and the by
were *healed*.

He raised to *life* the Daughter of tru
^a Mar. 5. 41 ^b *Jayrus*, the ⁱ *Widows* Son at *Naim* pov
^b Luk. 7. 11 his Friend ^k *Lazarus*, and ⁱ *many* bo the
^k Joh. 11. 39. dies of the Saints. Many of which to i
ⁱ Mat. 27. 52. *healed* and *raised* persons lived ti rec
^{ius.} *Eccl.* about *Trajan's* time, as *Quadratus* nat
^{H. l. 4. c. 3.} Disciple of the Apostles affirmed i
^{3. 37.} ^{3.} 37. his *Apology* to *Hadrian* the Empe Sup
^{Annot. p. 81} rour. Ch

Like a *strong man* armed he cast Hi
out Devils, whatever kind they Ex
were of he quickly dislodged them ou
^a Mat. 17. ^m that *foaming* and *tearing* Devi
^{18.} which withstood the power of hi Re
Disciples, and *threw* down and *tore* the Po
possessed person, even as he was *ye* in
coming

coming to Christ himself; he presently rebuked, and healed the child, and delivered him to his Father.

Neither their long possession, nor their numbers could secure them, he cast ^a seven at once out of Mary Magdalen, and an ^b whole Legion out of a ^c certain man of the Country of the Gadarens, who had been possessed by them a long time.

Moreover, for attestation to the truth of his Gospel, he delegated all this power to others, to the ^e 12 Apostles, to ^f the ^d 70 Disciples: ^e He bequeathed it to Believers at his death, and they also received and exercised this supernatural power.

I have given a few instances of the Supernatural Wisdom and Power of Christ solitarily considered: The History of the Gospel affords us many Examples wherein they were gloriously combined.

By his Knowledge ^f he foretold his Resurrection, he ^g performed it by his Power. By his Divine Understanding ^h he foresaw his Ascension, and by the

^f Mat. 16. 21.
^g Mat. 28. 2.
^h Joh. 16. 16, 28.
20. 17.

! Luk. 24. the Power of his Divinity he hit
57. ascended. wh

He ascended, and by his Power he dia
fulfilled the Predictions and Promises cei
! Act. 2. 4. which he had made. He^h sent down
the Holy Spirit, and shed forth the gift of
of supernatural Wisdom and Power Re
upon his Apostles. sho

Not to mention the Apparition of in h
! Acts 9. Angels, and of Christ himself, the He
! Acts 10. Bath. Kol. the ^cExtasies, ^dDreams, ^eVisions, and ^fImpulses which were th
22. 17. given them for their own assurance com
! Acts 16. 9. That they might be enabled to preach day
! 16. 6, 7. the Gospel to all Nations, and deliver
to the world those Scriptures whereo com
we are speaking, they had^f the word and
! Cor. 12. 9 of Knowledge and of Wisdom and B
of Faith, and the gift of divers pow
Tongues, and interpretation of rais
Tongues bestowed upon them. pose

And to justify their Doctrine to ver
the Ages present and to come, they and
had the Gifts of Prophecie, and orent
Healing, and of Miracles. the

! Ap. 4. 1. ⁱ John (the beloved Disciple) heard
a voice as it were of a Trumpet, talk-
ing with him, which said, Come upula
hither.

hither, and I will shew thee *things*
which shall be hereafter; and imme-
 diately he was in the *spirit*, and re-
 ceived the *Revelation*.

^a Paul an Apostle (though born out ^{Act. 27.}
 of due time) came to Visions and ^{10, 22.}
 Revelations, he *twice foretold* what
 should happen to the *Ship* where-
 in he was carried Prisoner to Rome.
 He foretold the ^b Apostacy of the lat- ^{2 Thel. 2.}
 ter times, the rising of *Antichrist*,
 the perillous times which should ^c ^{2 Tim. 3. 1}
 come upon the world in the last
 days. ^d Agabus a Believer at large ^{Act. 11. 8.}
 foretold the *Famine* which was to. ^{21. 10.}
 come upon all the world, ^e and the ^{Act. 5. 13.}
 binding of Paul at Jerusalem, &c.

But the Instances of supernatural
 power exercised in healing of Diseases,
 raising the dead, & confounding the Op-
 posers of their Doctrine, and in se-
 veral other kinds by the Apostles,
 and their Companions and Adhe-
 rents, the Preachers and Writers of
 the Doctrine of the Gospel, are so a-
 bundantly delivered in the New Te-
 stament, that I shall not offer at parti-
 culars.

C

In

In the 4. of the Acts we find all the Apostles praying ἐκπορεύειν, that God would stretch forth his hand to heal, & that signs and wonders might be done by the Name of his holy Child Jesus. And immediately the place was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and with Power.

The particular Miracles of particular persons are recorded. In one word, they went and preached every where the Doctrines which are written in the Gospel; the Lord working with them, and confirming their words by mighty signs and wonders, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.

This is the state of the matter of Fact, as it is propounded in the New Testament: I conclude therefore, the supposing matters of Fact to be true delivered in the New Testament there is no reason to doubt of the Doctrines delivered by Christ or his apostles, relating to faith or manne And I come to the consideration of the last and extreme Opinion of the Anti-scripturists.

IV. *The last Opinion, is of those who deny the truth of the Relation of matters of Fact delivered in the New Testament, and in consequence reject the whole body of the Scriptures.*

I could wish there were no such as these, and that what I have yet to say were altogether needless for that reason.

But what means then the publick Rumors which we hear? and whence is an Opinion gone into the world, that some great Philosophers and men of generous reason are dissatisfied concerning the truth of Scripture, and believe the Authority of it to be wholly derived from the Magistrate.

In reference to these I shall endeavour,

1. *Briefly, to shew that the ground upon which these Wisemen and Philosophers reject the Scriptures, is contrary to the Reason of mankind.*

2. *To evince, that the belief of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures is most agreeable to Reason.*

I. *As for the Argument and ground of those (amongst us Christians) that reject the body of the Scriptures, I do not remember to have heard of other than this.*

They have often called upon Believers, Pastors perhaps, or Doctors in the Church, for a clear and undeniable evidence of the truth of the story of the Gospel, and they have not afforded it: therefore they conclude, the Scriptures are to be rejected.

But is this the reasoning of generous Wits? and men of mighty deeds in Disputation, of men pretending to the depths of Reason and Philosophy?

To give a man a clear and undeniable evidence of any thing, there are but two ways, viz. To convince either his senses or his Understanding; the former whereof is to be done by Experiment, the later by Demonstration.

Would they have now an Experiment whether such or such a thing were done 16 or 1700 years ago? Would they have a demonstration of
parti-

particulars, in their nature indifferent to be done or not to be done, depending upon the liberty of Causes?

Well were it for the world, if these Beaux Esprits would have the patience, and endure the fatigue of acquainting themselves with the ways of knowledge (Experiment and Demonstration) it would not then be troubled with the dangerous Impertinency of such Pretenders.

*Then these men would not call for Experiment in a subject incapable of it, and (being instructed that Demonstration is only of Universal Propositions in *materia necessaria*, whose contrary Positions imply a contradiction) they would know, that to demand this kind of evidence of the truth of the story of the Gospel, is to be absurdly injudicious, and to act contrary to the Reason of mankind.*

For seeing we may not with civility suppose this principle to be advanced only for the destruction of Religion, and the ruine (or at least undeniable hazard) of the

Souls of men ; *We ought to believe* that these *Philosophers* intend this as a general *Maxim* ; “ that (in matters
 “ at least of moment) men ought not to
 “ adventure to act, but upon clear and
 “ undeniable evidence, and (speaking
 “ properly) that wise men ought to believe nothing at all. Wherefore let us suppose this for a general principle, and consider what will follow.

Setting aside the knowledge of the *Affections* of a few *Lines* and *Numbers*, is not all learning to be cast away ? Must not the *Civil World* of mankind be brought to swift *confusion* ? must not mankind it self, in a few days come to an end ?

Arist. polit.
l. 7. c. 8.

Suppose a *Subject* should not yield his *Obedience*, or a *Tenant* his *Rent*, till *Titles* be made out by *Experiment* or *Demonstration*. Suppose the *Husband-man* and the *Merchant*, the *Artificer*, the *Souldier*, the *Banker*, and the *Judge* should not adventure, but stay for the assurance of *Experiment* or *Demonstration*, would not the whole world be confounded ?

Suppose

Suppose men should not *marry*, nor take *Physick*, nor *eat* or *drink* till they should have *clear* and *undeniable* *evidence*, that all these things are what they suppose, and shall *succeed* according to *expectation*, would not *mankind* quickly be *spent*, and brought to an end?

If the management of all humane concernments, *Political*, *Oeconomical*, *Personal*, proceed upon the grounds of *Belief* and *Hope*, and rational (but not demonstrative) inference. If neither these *Philosophers* (if they would consider) nor any other *Person*, either ever did, or possibly could, perform any one action, upon such evidence, as these men require concerning the *truth* of the *stories* of the *Scripture*; then to reject them for want of such evidence, is repugnant to the Reason of mankind.

I proceed therefore to my *second* assertion, that the *Belief* of the *Divine Authority* of the *Scriptures* is most agreeable to reason.

That the *Divine Authority* of all the

C 4 *Scriptures*

Against the

Scriptures of the *Old* and *New Testament*, are *undeniably concluded* from supposition of the *truth* of the *Relation* or *History* of matters of *fact* in the *New Testament*, I have already shewn. And that the *rejection* of all *History* is *against* the *Reason* of mankind is evident, because all mankind receive some *History* or other: wherefore I shall briefly shew,

1. That the *History* of the *New Testament* hath all those *advantages* whereof any *History* is *capable*.

2. That it hath *greater* advantages than any other *History*.

1. The Arguments inducing men to the belief of any historical Relation, are all of them

Either { *Ab intra, Internal*, from the *Credibility* and *Scibility* of the Object. 2. The *Knowledge* and *Integrity* of the Writers. 3. The *way* and *manner* of writing.

{ *Ab extra, External*, The *Reception* of it in the world. 2. *Concurrent* testimonies of *strangers*. 3. The *Concessions* of *Adversaries*, and the like.

In

In all which particulars, *no History* in the world can justly pretend any advantage above that of the New Testament.

1. For the Credibility, Object, and Cognoscibility of it.

1. To say that instances of *super-natural Power and Wisdom* are *impossible*, is to deny the *power of God* and his *providence* in governing the world: And to say that such things are *incredible*, as are and have been actually *believed*, in all times, and by all sorts of persons, *Jews and Gentiles, Christians and Mahometans* (a few *Atheistical* persons only excepted) is an *absurdity*.

The *History* that we speak of, pretends to no *Intrigues* or *Cabalistical Counsels*, or *Mysteries of State*, but contains it self within the *limits* of things *Visible* and *Audible*, things that were *done* or *spoken*; so that *no History* can have advantage over it, *respectu Objecti*.

2. As for *Knowledge* in the deliverers, I shall shew it by a *brief Induction*.

The

Against the

The whole *New Testament* consists of the Books of the *Revelation*, *Epistles*, *Acts of the Apostles*, and the *Gospels*.

The *Authors* of the *Epistles* and the *Revelation*, in the *Narrative* part of them, deliver the things *done* or *spoken to* or *by themselves*, and could not be ignorant of their own *experiences*.

The *Book* of the *Acts* contains some things *done by* or *to the rest* of the *Apostles*, but chiefly the *concernments* of *Paul*; and it was written by *Luke*, who was an *individual Companion* of *Paul*, and *intimately conversant* with the *rest* of the *Apostles*.

For the things *Related* in the *Gospel* of *S. Luke*, he saith they were *delivered* to him by *those* who from the *beginning* were *Eye-witnesses* of the *works*, and *Ministers* of the *Word*, and his *History* agrees with the other *Evangelists*.

The *Gospel* of *S. Mark* hath nothing which is not in *S. Matthew* or *S. John*, and was *dictated* by *S. Peter*, the *Head* of the *Apostles*.

S. Matthew was an *Apostle*, and *S.*

John

John the Bosom Apostle of Christ.
The Apostles were chosen by him for
Witnesses of his Words and Actions,
they were with him from the begin-
ning of his Ministry, continued with
him till his death, conversed with him
till his Ascension; That which they had
heard, which they had seen with their
Eyes, which they had looked on, which
their hands had handled of the word
of life, that they delivered in writing
to the World: And more than this no
Writer or Relater of History can pre-
tend to.

2. For Arguments of their since-^a *Cor. 5. 8.*
 rity, they have left ^a *Procepts of Ve-*
 racity, and ^b *prohibitions of lying, un-*
 der pain of Hell torments, the Lake ^b *Phil. 4. 8.*
 that burneth with fire and brimstone: ^b *Jam 3. 14*
Eph. 4. 25.
They have^c protested that they did not
follow cunningly devised Fables; that
they did things sincerely as in the sight
of God. ^c *2 Pet. 1. 16*
^c *2 Cor. 2. 17*

They have appealed to the searcher
 of hearts: The God and Father of our
 Lord Jesus Christ knoweth that I lie
 not. The things which I write unto
 you, behold, before God I lye not, *Gal. 1.*
20. faith S. Paul.

They

1 Theſ. 2. 3. They have left behind them various instances of their simplicity and godly sincerity in representing their failings to the world, and of candour and ingenuity in distinguishing the dictates of their own Reason from the inspirations of the Holy Spirit: I speak by permission, not by commandment of the Lord: This say I, not the Lord. Thus it is according to my judgment &c. 1 Cor. 7.

But besides all this, let the matter be estimated according to common reason: If these men did devise a Fable and impose it upon the world, what end could they propound to themselves in so doing? was there any profit in being destitute of all things? or pleasure in being persecuted, afflicted, and tormented? or honour in being counted Fools and Madmen.

Before they began to publish the Stories whereof we speak, their Master was gone, and all worldly hopes were gone away with him: If they were not bound in Conscience, and in spi-

rit,

rit; what obligation had he laid upon them to labour and suffer for his honour as they did?

To omit the severity of his behaviour to them, He called them off from their *Vocations*, Peter, and Andrew, James, and John from their *Fishing*, Matthew from his *Customers* place, the rest accordingly. Mat. 9. 9.

They forsook their *Nets*, their *ships*, their *Relations*, and all their *interests*, and followed him. Mat. 4. 20. 22.

And this they did (*clearly and plainly*) believing that he was to be a *Great Temporal Prince*, and in hopes of *Preferment* under him. In this Expectation they continued to the last minute of his conversation with them upon Earth, and he permitted them so to do.

Their last words to him were delivered in this question, *Lord wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom unto Israel?* A. 1. 6. Of the *thing* it self they never doubted, they only desire to be informed of the *time*,

Now after so long expectation?
Consider his Answer. His

His Answer was this, *It is not for you to know the times, &c. but ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses of me unto the utmost parts of the earth; and immediately he vanished away.*

Was this an answer to their Question? or a satisfaction to their expectation? Was this an Obligation laid upon them? If he had not sent down the Holy Ghost, this would have moved them indeed, but it would have been to rage and indignation; this would have obliged them indeed, but it would have been to detest and abhor the name and memory of him that had abused them. But for the honour of his name, not their own, they did and suffered all things, and gloried in it. An irrefragable argument of their sincerity in the things which they delivered.

3. *Of the internal Arguments for the belief of History, there remains only the Consideration of the way and manner of writing.*

Histories then carry their own credentials

for *dentials* in them, when the *principal* parts of them are *delivered* with such *circumstances* of *times*, *places*, and *persons*, as may render them liable to *Examination*, and *Refutation*, if they contain any *falsehood* in them.

And in this particular, no *History* hath any *advantage* over that *History* whereof we are *speaking*, as will be *evident* to him that considers it *thoroughout*.

Concerning *John* the *Baptist*, it is recorded, that he was born some few Luk. 1. 5. Months before *Christ*, that his *Mother* was *Elizabeth*, that his *Father* was *Zachariah*, a *Priest* of the *Course* of *Abia*, that they lived in the *Hill-Country*.

He began to *preach* in the 15. of *Tyberius*, *Pilat* being *Governour* of *Judea*, *Herod* *Tetrarch* of *Galilee*, Luk. 3. 1. his *Brother Philip* *Tetrarch* of *Iturea*, and of the *Region* of *Trachonitis*, and *Lysanias* *Tetrarch* of *Abilene*. *Punctual* and *particular*.

Soon after this he was *Imprisoned* Mat. 14. 3. and *Beheaded* by *Herod*, for *repre-* Vide Jo- *hending* him about *Herodias*, all which seph. Ant. 18. c. 9. 10. were matters of *Fact*, very *easie*, if Luk. 2. 1. *false*,

false, to have been refuted.

Concerning *Christ*, his birth is stated to have been at a time the most remarkable that ever was, when the whole world was taxed by *Augustus*, in the days of *Herod*, when *Cyrenius* was Governour of *Syria*; the place easie to be enquired of, it was in a Manger, in an Inne, in a Town that was a little one among the thousands of *Juda*, easie to be examined.

When he was about 30 years old, he was Baptized of *John*, & within a few days after he called his Apostles; and in less than four years space he performed all his mighty Works, whereof I shall mention only some few particulars.

At *Cana* in *Galilee* he turned Water into Wine, at a Wedding, where was much company. He raised the Daughter of *Jayrus*, the Ruler of the Synagogue, there was but one in that place, she was his only Daughter, and about 12 years Old. He healed the Servant of that Centurion that had built a Synagogue. Can any thing be more particular?

At *Bethany*, 15 Furlongs from *Jerusalem*,

Jerusalem, a few days before his death, he raised *Lazarus* after he had been dead *four days*. Could any thing be more *examinable*?

His death was at *Jerusalem*, at the time of the *Passeover*, a time of greatest annual *concourse* in the world, and then it is said, that the *Sun* was darkened, the *Veil* rent, the *Rocks* torn a-pieces, the *Graves* opened. Can any thing be more *refutable* than these things, if they had been false?

So likewise for the *Apostles*. The healing of *Aeneas* at *Lydda*, raising of *Dorcas* at *Joppe*, the passages with *Cornelius* Captain of the Band called the *Italian Band* at *Cæsarea*, and many other acts of *Peter*. The increpation of *Barjesus* at *Paphos*, in the presence of *Sergius Paulus* the Governour. The healing of a *Cripple* at *Lystra*, in the presence of the *Priest* of *Jupiter*, besides many other acts of *Paul*, and the rest of the *Apostles*, are so circumstantiated in the *History*, that if false they might have been very easily contradicted.

D

But

Acts 9. 33.

40.

10. 1.

13. 6.

14. 13.

Against the

But *besides* all these, this History contains a *Narration* of things done and said, not only by persons well affected, but by *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate*, and the *Roman Governours*, by the *Pharisees*, the *Scribes*, the *High Priests*, and the *Sanhedrim*; all of them *Enemies* both to the *Historians* and the *History*; and if any of these things had been convicted of *falsehood*, would not the *credit* of the whole *Gospel* have (at once) been utterly *overthrown*?

I conclude therefore, that in respect of *internal Arguments* for belief, no *History* hath, or indeed can have any advantage above the *History* of the *New Testament*.

2. As for *External Arguments*, I can but name them. Though the whole world interested themselves against the story (so examinable as you have heard) though the *Books* were extant, while the *memory* of things was recent, *Matthew* within seven years, *Mark* within eleven, *Luke* about twenty-four, post mortem *Christi*; the *Epistles* of

Peter

Peter and Paul within thirty years, all the rest, *intra unius hominis aetatem*, yet no man could ever convince them of falsehood.

The stories were received by men of the greatest Wisdom, Learning, and Virtue amongst the Greeks and Latines. Many of the hardest passages were attested and confessed by Enemies and Unbelievers.

The Authors owned by Julian: the^a *Cyrril* c.
Miracles confessed by *Celsus*: the^{10. c. Jul.}
checking of the operation of the Devil ^{Orig. c. C.}
by *Porphyrius*: ^a the Darknefs and ^{d Tertio Hi-}
Earthquake at the death of Christ by ^{storiarum,}
Thallus and *Phlegon Trallianus*: ^{Citat. d Ju-} the
Crucifixion of Christ (by *Pilat* under ^{lio Afr. 3.}
Tiberius) by *Tacitus*: And in one ^{Chronogræ}
word, The entire Volume of the Scri- ^{Orig. c. c. 13.}
ptures, the very same which our Church ^{c 15. 44.}
receives (by virtue of the belief of the ^{Annalium.}
History of the Gospel) ^f before any ge- ^{r Athanas.}
neral Council, or the time of *Constan-* ^{Synops.}
tine, without any Convocation of the ^{g Const. ad}
clergy, or imperial Edict for that pur- ^{p. p. Nicæa,}
pose, was *instinctu quodam Chri-* ^{Vide Theo-}
stiano, generally received by all Chri- ^{doret. l. 1.}
stians, ^{c. 6. Gr-}
^{Lat. Pat.}

*stians, and the world made Christi-
stians.*

In respect of all these Arguments internal and external, I might have justly said, that the History of the Gospel hath the advantage of any other History; but seeing there are some particulars wherein the advantages are super-eminent, I shall speak a little of that distinctly by it self, and so conclude.

2. These advantages I shall reduce to two heads, *Testimonium Rei.*
} *Dei.*

1. For the *Testimonium Rei*, consider,

1. Opposition to } the Gospel.
 2. Prevailing of }

1. Never any story was so much opposed as the Books and History of the New Testament, by Jews and Gentiles by the World and by the Devil.

The beginnings and propagation of the Gospel was by the Jews maliciously and strenuously opposed in the time of Christ and his Apostles, and in all succeeding Generations.

Lest all men should believe in Christ Joh. 11. 48
(because of his *Miracles*) the *Rulers*
took counsel to *destroy* him, the *Peo-*
ple cryed out to have him *Cruci-*
fied.

Lest the last error (as they called *Mat. 27. 64*
it) should be worse than the first, they
sealed up his *Sepulchre*, and set a watch
upon it; and lastly, suborned the *Soul-*
diers to say, that his *Disciples* came by
night while they were sleeping (how
could they know this?) and stole him
away.

That the first *Miracle* wrought by *A. 4. 6.*
Peter and *John* might not spread a-
mong the *People*, the *Rulers* and *Elders*
and *Scribes*, *Annas* and *Caiaphas*, and
John and *Alexander*, and all the *Kin-*
dred of the *High Priest*, laid hands up-
on them, and put them in hold, and
threatned and commanded them not
to speak at all in the Name of *Je-*
sus.

When *Stephen* had uttered his testi- *A. 7. 57.*
mony, the people cried with a loud
voice, and stopped their Ears, and
ran upon him with one accord, and

cast him out of the City, and stoned him.

AR.9.3. Wherever they met with Believers, Men or Women, they haled them into Prison, breathing out threatnings and slaughter. Wherever they met with the Preachers, they opposed and blasphemed, they tumultuated, they
 AR.13.45
 14.2. stirred the Gentiles, they en-
 13.50. raged the chief men of the Cities and the honourable women against them.

The instances of their malicious opposition, in all ages of the Church, are so many as are not to be numbred in a few Minutes, but would require many days only to name them.

They first stirred up Nero to persecute the Christians, they contrived the death of Polycarpus, they stood by, and insulted over the dying Martyrs; in a word, whoever shall read the stories of primitive times, he will find that the Jews were generally the Setters and Informers against the Martyrs, and the Brokers for their Goods after Execution: And the Histories of

OUR

our own and other Nations will shew us the *height* of their *malice*, and the *continuance* of it.

Now, *beside* the little Nation of the Jews, the rest of the whole world, when this *History* began to be published, and the Books written, were Heathen, universally devoted to the Devil, whom therefore our Saviour stiles, the Prince of this world.

And now that feud which had depended betwixt the seed of the Serpent and the seed of the woman 4000 years, was by the preaching and writing of these things brought to a Crisis.

The professed and declared design of the Gospel, was to drive the Devil out of his Dominion; Notwithstanding the antiquity of his possession, the universality of his Church, and the consent of all Nations, whereby he held his title. Notwithstanding his Empire was supported by Governours and Laws, and fortified by the Arms and actual strength of all the world, he saw, that if the Gospel were not sup-

pressed, a little time would spoil the pride of all his glory, that in a moment he should fall like lightning from Heaven.

Deut. 7.

That he should be exorcised out of the bodies which he possessed: That his famous Oracles should soon be put to silence: his gorgeous Temples and Images should be torn down, his Mysteries and lying wonders set at nought: That Prayers and Vows would be made to him no more, and he should cease to be celebrated in the Songs of his Poets, and Hymns of his Hierophantæ.

That his revelling Festivals would be turned to mourning, no more gifts would be presented, no beasts, nor children, women or men sacrificed upon his Altars.

The Contention was de rerum summa (pro aris & focis) and his rage was kindled accordingly: He summons together all his wiles and stratagems, he musters all his forces, he sounds an Allarm to the world, stirs up young and old, rich and poor, all ages,

ages, sexes, conditions, the people
 wise and unwise, the Common Souldiers *orig. c. c.*
 and Commanders, Counsellors and *l. i.*
 Judges, Senate and Emperours, by
 suppressing these Books, and destroying
 the Believers of them, to erase the me-
 mory of the Gospel, and abolish it for
 ever.

The people were enraged against the
 Believers, as against the common Ene-
 my of mankind, and *pro solenni suo*,
 they slandered them with unthought
 of wickedness, they imputed to them
 all the calamities of the world: And
 required them to death: *Si Tiberis a-*
scendit in mœnia---Christianos ad Leo-
nes---

Against these Books, the Learned
 employed their Learning, and the
 Witty employed their Wit. *Celsus*,
Porphyrus, *Jamblichus*, *Hierocles*, and
 other Philosophers, endeavoured to
 dispute them out of the world. *Sym-*
machus and *Libanius*, and other Rhe-
 tors to declaim them away. *Julian*
 and *Lucian* and other *Scoptick wits*,
 endeavoured to jeer and droll away
 the credit of them. Mean

Mean while the *Senators* and *Lawyers* employ themselves to *destroy* the *Books*, by *stretching* against them the *ancient Laws* against bringing in *Foreign Religions*, and against *Magical* and *Fatidical Books*: And to *destroy Books* and *Believers* by *New Laws* made for that purpose, against *Combinations* (*Heteriæ*) *Sacrilege*, *Treason*, the *Law* that none should *buy* or *sell*, or *draw water* without *Thurification* to the *Gods*, and the like.

Plin. Ep.
10.97.

By force of these they persecute the *Believers*, as *Enemies* to the *Commonwealth*, and *Traytors* to the *Emperour*, as *sacrilegious* persons, and *contemners* of *Religion*.

The people sometimes rising upon them without any *Edict*, sometimes by virtue of *Edicts Imperial* or *Proconsular*.

From the beginning of the *Gospel* to the end of *Dioclesian* and *Maximian*, this was the state of *Believers*.

Their *Scriptures* were forbidden to be read, and required to be burned; their

their Oratories and (*obscure*) Churches were pulled in pieces; their Estates were plundered and confiscate; their bodies were imprisoned and tormented; Fire and Sword, hot Iron Chairs and Coffins, Gridirons, and Cauldrons, Hooks, Stakes, and Gibbets, the Teeth of Lions, and Tygers, &c. were their portion.

It cannot be shewed, that ever any Book or Story met with equal Opposition.

2. Consider then how it prevailed, how quickly and largely, how deeply and effectually, although the Precepts were not contrived to solicit the Affections, nor the Doctrines to court the Reason of men.

At one Sermon of Peter 3000, at another 5000 were converted: Within a few years after the death of Christ we find by S. Peter, that the Gospel was preached throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia; and Paul had planted it from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum: Besides what was done by other Apostles, in the Provinces assigned them at the Council of Jerusalem. Within

Act. 2. 41.

1 Pet. 1. 1.

Act. 15.

Lib. 10.
Epist. 97.

Within 66 years this grane of Mustard seed was become a Tree, Pliny Proconsul of Bithynia (to whom the care of Religion, *ex officio*, did appertain) appointed by Trajan to suppress the Christians, he writes to him, that this Belief was *Longè latèq; diffusa Civitates, Vicos, Agros, impletos Christi cultoribus*.

During the second Century, it had shot out great branches, the boughs of this Tree were stretched out, *Hæsterni sumus & vestra omnia implevimus*. Tertullian reckons up the known parts of the World, *in quibus omnibus Christi nomen regnat*, and concludes, *ubiq; porrigitur, creditur, colitur, regnat, adoratur*.

Adv. Juda-
ei, c. 7, 8.

And lastly, During the third (*à morte Christi*) the Fowls of the air, and Beasts of the field lodged under the shadow of it: The Net drew good and bad to shore; the Roman Emperour and Empire declared themselves Christians, i.e. Believers and Assertors of these Books: So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

It went on conquering and to conquer, not by the Spirit of the sword, but by the sword of the Spirit; the powers of the Earth, and the gates of Hell could not withstand it; it drove the Devil away with all his Temples, Idols, Oracles, Priests, Sacrifices, Services, like lightning: So fell the Dragon, the old Serpent that deceived the World, he was cast out with all his train.

So fell Lucifer the Son of the morn, his Friends and his Followers lamenting.

How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer the Son of the morning! Desolata Tempia rarissimus Victimarum emptor! Some complain of people forsaking of the Gods, others of the Gods forsaking their Oracles and Temples, and becoming useless to the World: He said I will ascend into Heaven, and exalt my Throne above the Stars, but he was soon brought down to Hell.

For the Gospel like Leaven or Fire from Heaven, seized upon all that stood before it; it leaven'd Cities, Islands, Castles,

Tert. Ap. 37

Castles, Councils, Camps, the Tribes and Decuries, the Palaces, Senate, Pleading-places.

It took possession of the Learned, and the Wise, the greatest and noblest Wits of the Eastern and Western Nations: It raised up Philosophers to confound the Philosophy, and noble Orators to confound the Rhetorick where-with it was opposed.

Against *Celsus* it excited *Origen*, against *Porphyrie*, *Apollinarius*, & *Methodius*; against *Porphyrie* and *Hierocles*, *Lactantius* and *Ensebius* (besides what was written *sparsim* by *Jerom*, *Augustine*, *Cyril*, &c.) It set up *Chrysostom* against *Libanius*, *Prudentius* against *Symmachus* and the *Rhetoricians*.

And as it spread it self large and high, so where it took possession, it took a deep possession, Quantum vertice---tantum radice: Those that received it truly, received it in the love thereof, it took possession of their hearts: it penetrated their spirits, and took its lodging in the inmost recesses
of

of the *soul*. The *Contents* of these *Books* was their most *precious Pearl*, and they *hid* it in their *heart*. The *Books themselves* were their greatest *worldly treasure*, and rather than they would *deliver* them to be *burned*, they chose to suffer the *loss of honour, liberty, estate, Wives, and Children*, nay even *life* it self. When *Dioclesian* required the *Scriptures* that they might be *burned*, In one *Province* (*Egypt*) in one *Month*, 17000 persons chose rather to dye than to *deliver* them: In *Ensl. 2. 63* comparison of these they counted not their *lives* dear to them; the *love* of them was *stronger* than *Death*, many *waters* could not *quench* it, neither could the *flouds* drown it. This was *Testimonium Rei*, and an advantage above all other *Histories, or Writings* in the *World*.

2. Moreover they had *Testimonium Dei*. Indeed all that is already *spoken* is an evidence of a *Divine assistance*: But more particularly, *God* gave *Testimony* to these *Books*, by

1. Their

1. *Their operation upon Believers of them.*

2. *His co-operation with Believers of them.*

1. *The Gospel which they contain, was the power of God to every true Believer. That which no Institution in Philosophy, nor Initiation in the Mysteries of any of the Gods, was ever*
Wide Orig. able to accomplish, that was every
C. Cels. l. 3. where achieved by the belief of the
Gospel, in a moment. Like a charm
from Heaven, it stilled the passions,
and mortified the lusts of men. What
a Beadroll doth Paul reckon up in the
Corinthians: But ye are washed (saith
1 Cor. 6. 9. he) but ye are sanctified, but ye are
justified, in the Name of the Lord Je-
sus, and by the spirit of our God.

Notwithstanding all the calumnies
thrown upon Believers, and the pre-
judice wherewith they were loaded,
the unpropitious and relucting world
were forcibly convinced that the Be-
lievers of these Books were effectually
taught to deny ungodliness and world-
ly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously,
and

Last. de
fals. sap.
l. 3. c. 26.

and godly in this present world: through the cloud of ignominy where-with they were encompassed, their innocency broke forth as the light, and their just dealing as the noon day; the piety, loyalty, justice, charity, magnanimity, patience, meekness, and purity of Believers of these Books, convinced the unbelieving world, that God was in them of a truth: for they teach as having Authority and Power, and not as the writings of other scribes.

2. But beside the operation of these Books upon the Believers, God was pleased to give testimony to them by his co-operation with them in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds.

The History of the Gospel tells us, that when Christ was even now leaving the world, he left this Legacy to Believers for confirmation of the truth of the Gospel; These signs (said he) shall follow them that believe; In my name they shall cast out Devils; Mar. 16. 17
Speak with new tongues; Take up Serpents; If they drink any deadly thing,

E

it

it shall not hurt them; They shall lay hands on the Sick, and they shall recover.

Now that this was made good, and that these signs (so long as there was need) were continued among Believers, we have as good assurance as we can have of any thing beyond our own memory or experience.

They have been delivered to us by a Cloud of Witnesses; by men of the greatest Wisdom and Learning in their Generations, by persons of such integrity, that they laid down their lives in testimony of their veracity; delivered not by hear-say, but upon their certain knowledge; delivered in their Disputations with, and Apologies to the Adversaries of Christianity, with a challenge to the examination of the truth, or a conviction of the falshood of them. Instances are very numerous, I shall produce only a very few.

Dial. cum
Tryphone.

Justin the Martyr (who suffered Anno 165) affirms to Trypho the Jew, that these supernatural gifts were found in his time among Christians.

Irenæus

Irenæus an Auditor of Polycarp, who was a Disciple of S. John (suffered circa 206) affirms upon his own knowledge, that the gift of Propheſie was then frequent in the Church, that many had the gift of tongues, *ipſi audi- vimus*; Others caſt out Devils, Others healed Diſeaſes, Others raiſed the dead; and thoſe raiſed perſons continued many years amongſt them, *pro certo*.

Iren. l. 22.

c. 36.

Euf. b. 3. c. 7

item c. 20.

Tertullian in his *Apologetica adverſus Gentes*, affirms that *Jam de vobis Dæmonas ejiciunt*.

Origen againſt *Celfus*, ſaith, that he himſelf had ſeen by invocation of God, and the Name of Jeſus very many that were delivered from grievous maladies, *ἀπ' ἐκστάσεων* (*alienatione mentis*) *μανίων καὶ ἄλλων μυρίων*.

L. 3.

Not to mention others, S. *Auguſtine* in his *Book de Civitate Dei* (begun about 410, but many years in writing) l. 22. c. 8. gives an account of very many Miracles done at Hippo, Carthage, and other places, of no great diſtance, noting times, places, perſons,

occasions, appealing to the Country, delivering them under terms of the greatest assurance; Scio ego; cognosco ego; nos interfuimus, & oculis nostris aspeximus: And in his Retractations, Ea quæ cognoscimus neq; referre neq; enumerare possumus.

Other Histories and Writings, and the Authors and Believers of them can pretend no higher than to the testimony of men, these have the testimony of God also: If we believe the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. I conclude therefore, that there is greater Reason to believe the History of the New Testament than any other History in the world.

The sum of all is this, The Divine Authority of the Scriptures is the great fundamental and comprehensive Principle of Christianity, which being admitted it stands, and being removed it presently falls to the ground,

Against this therefore the great Enemy of Religion in these later days (under pretence of Reason and Philosophy) directs his Forces, and is said

to

to have found a success very pernicious and deplorable.

I humbly conceive that the *Resolution* of the *belief of the Divine Authority* of the *Scriptures* into the *Decrees of Popes*, or *Determinations of Councils* with those who call themselves *Roman-Catholicks*, into *private impulses* and *dictates* of the *Spirit* with the *Enthusiasts*, and into the *Laws* and *Edicts* of *Princes* and *Magistrates* with our new *pretenders to Reason* and *Philosophy*, is that *engine* whereby the *Devil* hath prevailed to scandalize the *world* and cast it into *Antiscriptural* infidelity.

It is for this *cause* that I have conceived it *requisite* (after many others who have *done worthily*) to have *recourse* (once more) to the *Original* *Reason* of things, and the common *grounds* whereupon *mankind* doth proceed in matters of this *nature*. *Vide Philosoph. Essay.*

Where (hoping that I have *escaped* the *absurdity* of *begging* the matter in *Question*, *discoursing* in a *circle*, and the *inconveniences* of some other *methods*)

thods) I have endeavoured to demonstrate: That supposing the truth of the New Testament, both 1. The Old Testament, and 2. The New Testament are to be received as of Divine Authority.

3. And supposing matters of fact to be truly related, the Doctrinal parts are to be believed.

4. For the Historical Relation of matters of fact, that there is no ground to dis-believe it.

That for the Reception of it, it hath
1. All the advantages whereof an History is capable.

2. Far greater advantages than any other History.

Wherefore I conclude, that All the Scriptures (i. e. the Canonical Books of the Old Testament and the Books of the New Testament) were given by inspiration of God. Quod erat demonstrandum.

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CONCERNING

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Sinfulness }
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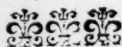
SERMON

Preached at *Whitehall*,

Feb. 16. 16⁶⁷₈₈.

BY

SETH *Lord Bishop of Sarum.*



LONDON,

Printed for *James Collins*, at the Kings-
head in *Westminster-hall*. 1670.



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THE
SINFULNESS
OF
INFIDELITY.

Heb. III. 12.

Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.-- Exhort one another daily. ---



Shall not spend time in a disputation concerning the Author of this Epistle, viz. whether it were *Paul*, or *Barnabas*, or *Luke*, or *Clemens*, or *Apollos*, &c. but shall with the Church of *England*, suppose *S. Paul* to have been the Author of it.

A 2

If

The Sinfulness

If the Author of it be not infallibly known, this ought not to detract from its Authority.

Most of the other *Epistles* have been *acknowledg'd* to be of *divine* Authority, because they were *known* to have proceeded from *Apostolical* writers.

This (on the *contrary*) hath been concluded to be an *Apostolical* Epistle, *propter τὴν θεϊκὴν καὶ ἀποστολικὴν* Characterem, by reason of that divine and Apostolical Spirit, which to those who have had their Senses exercised, hath manifestly appeared in it.

If it were lawful (in this sense) to compare *spiritual* things with *spiritual*; I should not fear to affirm, that this *Epistle* hath in it some *peculiar advantages*; Compared with some other of the *Epistles*. (*Advantages*, I mean, of usefulness, not of Authority, seeing all of them issued from the same Spirit.)

The *design* of it is *General*, *Fundamental*, *Comprehensive*, not *Private*, *Circumstantial*, *Occasional*; And it hath peculiarly conveyed to the Church two great treasures. 1. A *Compleat Model*.

or System, of *Christian Divinity*. And the *Way* of that *Analogy*, and manner of ratiocination, whereby the *true Spirit*, and meaning of the *Types* and *Prophecies* of the *Old Testament* is to be found out and applied.

It was directed to the *Hebrews*; That is, to those of the *Jewish Nation*, who had received the *Gospel*, and made a Profession of Christianity. And the main *Scope* and *design* of it, is to preserve the *Professors* of Christianity from *Apostacy* and *Infidelity*.

The *means* used to this purpose; are partly *Didactical*, and partly *Protreptical*; *Demonstrating* the truths of the *Gospel*, and then *urging* the Professors of those truths, to be *stedfast* in the *faith*, and to beware of *Infidelity*.

The *Method* here used is a *mixt method* of *Doctrine* and *Application*; *Dogmatical* truths and *pathetical Exhortations* continually interwoven.

He begins with the *Great foundation* Chap. 1. of our *faith*. *Christ* is the Son of God, the *brightness* of his glory; better then the *Angels*. Wherefore if the Word Chap. 2. spoken by *Angels* was *stedfast*, how

4 The Sinfulness

shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

Chap. 3. From the *Comparison* of *Christ* with *Moses*, he concludes against Hardness of Heart and Infidelity.

5. 6. 7. 8. He demonstrates the *Priesthood* of *Christ* to be more *Excellent* then that of *Aaron*; and in the *midst* of his *argument*, he falls into an *Application*, or *Corollary*, concerning the dreadful *Condition* of them that fall away.

6. This is his design, and method, thorowout the *Epistle*; *Whatever Doctrine* he is upon, this is still the *drift* and *aim* of all his *Applications*, namely to *preserve* the *Professors* of *Christianity*, from *Apostacy* and *Infidelity*.

3. 5. The words, which I have chosen, are a *Reiteration* or *Reinforcement* of an *Application*, or *Corollary*, arising from the *Consideration* of the *Excellency* of *Christ* above *Moses*. *Moses* was faithful in the house as a *Servant*; *Christ* as a *Son*, over his *own* house. This house are we if we hold fast *our faith*.

Wherefore as the *Holy Ghost* saith, *Harden not your hearts*—

Take

Take heed brethren, lest —

I say, the words are an *Use of Exhortation*, and in them are considerable,

1. The Persons to whom directed: Professors of Christianity, expressed in the Word *Brethren*.

2. Matter or Object about which it is conversant, *Unbelief*: heart *unbelief*.

3. Form of Exhortation *by way of Caveat*. βλέπετε. take heed.

Now every *Caveat* implies,

1. Evil in the thing.

2. Danger of the thing.

3. That there are wayes and means to prevent it. This is implied in the *Caveat*, and expressed in words following.

My design, at this time, will be to enforce the Exhortation of the Text: And seing that every Application is a *Consequence* or *Corollary* arising from some *Antecedent* Proposition, and the force of it is finally resolved into the truth and evidence and concernment of that *Antecedent*: Therefore it will be necessary to draw out that *Antecedent* by reflecting briefly upon the Text as it lies in the *Series* of the Epistle.

A 4

I. Then,

I. Then, for the *Persons*. They are here styled *Brethren*, and elsewhere, *Holy Brethren*, *Partakers of the heavenly Calling*. They were *φωτισθέντες*, baptized into the *Profession* of the *Gospel*, they had *tasted* of the *Word of God*, and the power of the world to come.

II. The Matter. *Unbelief*, or rather *Disbelief*, (not Negative Infidelity, but a positive Revolting from the faith which they had professed) *Generally*, a Disbelief of the *Word* of God; *Particularly*, a Disbelief of the *Gospel*, as to the *Doctrines*, or *Promises*, or *Threatnings* thereof.

III. For the *Form* that which is here expressed by *βλέπετε* (look to it) is in the other forms of *Exhortation*, throughout the Epistle, expressed by termes of the *greatest Emphasis* and earnestness imaginable, Let us **Fear** lest we fall short, 4. 1.

Labour to enter, 4. 11.

Use diligence, not be slothful, 6. 11, 12.

Press earnestly, draw near, hold fast, 10. 22.

ως 10-

ἑκαστέως προσέχει μὴ πότε πα-
εῖρησῶμεν. Let us give more dili-
gent heed lest by any means we should
let it slip, 2.1.

So that the Summe of the Apostles
Argumentation is this: *The last resoluti-*
on of all the Obligation of men, is into
reasons of Duty and of Interest.

If there be *Wickedness* in *Infideli-*
ty, it is matter of *Duty*, if there be
Danger in it, and *Danger* of it, it is mat-
ter of *Interest* and *Concernment* to Be-
ware of it.

This *Heart of Unbelief* is an *Evil*
heart (καρδία πονηρά) there is *Wicked-*
ness in it. It grieves the Spirit of God;
It provoked him So, that he swore in his
wrath, that he would take Vengeance
for it: there is *Danger* in it. Yet it was
a thing *Ordinary* and *common* amongst
the *Fathers* of these Hebrews, it was
neque *Novum*, neque *Rarum*, *There is*
Danger of it.

“ It is the *Duty* and *Concernment*
“ of every one *Professing* Christianity
“ to take heed lest there be in them an
“ *heart of Unbelief*; and to use all means
“ to prevent it. This is the *Ante-*
“ cedent. *Where-*

Wherefore take heed brethren, &c. — (which is the Exhortation by way of Caveat; — *Exhort one another daily, &c.* which is the way to prevent it.

So then for the enforcement of the exhortation upon the whole matter, I am to speak

I. *Of the Evil of Infidelity.*

II. *Of the Danger of falling into it.*

III. *Of the meanes of preventing it.*

And then to conclude with

IV. *The Exhortation of the Text.*

1. In speaking of the *Evil of Infidelity*, I shall not discourse at large, but confine my self to an enquiry into *two pretenses* (Which having been broached in the late times of *Infidelity towards the King*, are said to have operated very far towards a general *Apostacy* from the faith, and the production of *Infidelity towards God*) both which appealing to the *tenor of the Scriptures*; must be examined by them.

3. The first is of a *famous Author*, and it is this, That the *Scriptures* do not make *Infidelity* to be a *Sin*, at the time of the delivery of the *Scriptures*.

The

The second is of a *Writer more obscure*, but in it self, so agreeable to the disposition of the present generation, that it hath possessed the minds of many; it is this, that

C.W.

Although Infidelity (according to the Scriptures) in the times of *Christ and his Apostles*, were *sinful*, and *inexcusable*; yet in *our* times, it is *excusable*. These are the pretences to be examined.

The Substance of the Gospel, as it immediately relates to Christian duty, is summarily reduced to the *Doctrines* and *Injunctions* of our Lord Christ, and his Apostles.

The Author of *Leviathan* (cap. 42. pag. 286.) tells us in plain terms, that "*We do not read any where (in the Scriptures) that they which received not the Doctrine of Christ, did therein Sin.*"

"And again, that the *Injunctions* of *Christ*, and his *Apostles*, men might refuse without sin.

Now concerning this assertion, I cannot chuse but say, that had I not been acquainted with the works of that author

thour (especially those relating to religion) I should exceedingly wonder at it, because it *supposes* men never to look into their Bibles, which is the thing it would perswade.

Mat. 21. 42. In the 21. of Matth. Our Saviour asks the *Jewes* this question, *Did ye never read in the Scriptures* such a thing: a question which I must repeat to the *Affertors* of this *doctrine*. Did they *never read in the Scriptures* the *Sinfulness*, the *Danger*, the *Heinousness* of Infidelity? Surely he that runs may read it.

Luc. 9. 41. Our Saviour Christ, *before his death*, did *oftentimes* vehemently rebuke his Disciples, for *Infidelity*, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I endure you? (*Quousque tandem abutemini patientiâ nostrâ*) And *after his Resurrection*, he calls them *fools* and *slow of heart*, for unbelieving: Did they never read these *Increpations*?

The *Author* of this Epistle, and the *rest* of the *Apostles*, do every where *vehemently* and *earnestly* *dehort* from Unbelief. Did they *never* read these *Dehortations*?

In the 8 of *John*, Christ tells the *Jewes*,

of Infidelity.

II

Jews, that if they *believe* not, they *shall dy in their Sins*. That the *wrath* of God *abideth* on them. that *he that believeth* not, is *damned* already. Did they never read these *Denunciations*? Jo. 8. 24.
3. 36.

Yes ! these last, it seems this Author had read, & as his manner is, thinking he could accommodate an answer to these, he hath pronounced securely of all the rest: *To these* he saith that they *import* only a *non-remission* of the *sins committed aganst the laws of their Country*; (that they should dy in *them*;) but that they do *not* evince, any *sinfulness* to be in *Infidelity*; Wherefore I must crave licence to proceed.

The *Apostle* in the 21 of the Revelations, give a *Catalogue* of such *sinners* as 4.
R. 21. 8. are of the *bigest* rank, *Such* as are most *abominable* in the eyes of God, *Such* as are to have their *portion* in that *lake* which burneth with *fire* and *brimstone*, and he puts *Unbelievers* in the head of this Regiment The *fearful* and “*Unbelievers*, and *Abominable*, and *Murtherers*, and *Whoremongers*, and *Sorcerers*, and *Lyars* shall have their *portion* in that lake.

But

Obj. 1. But it may be, perhaps; that the *Scripture* doth not in *plain* and *expresse* *termes*, affirm Infidelity to be Sinful!

Res. 1. The Text tells us *plainly* and *expresse* *ly*, that an heart of unbelief is *καρδία πονηρά* (not *κακή* but *πονηρά*, not incommodious but wicked.)

Obj. 2. But *Philosophers* and *Mathematicians*; (pretending *Strictness* & *demonstration* in discourse) regard *not* *general* words; but have recourse to the *Definitions* of *things*, and from *thence* proceed to *affirm* or *deny* the *Attribution* which is under question. Let us therefore have recourse to the *definition* of *Sin*.

Those who have spoken most *accurately* concerning the *nature* of *Sin*, they have resolved, that the *formal* *notion* of it, consists in a *departure* from *God*. it is *Aversio à Deo*, & *Conversio ad creaturam*.

Jer. 2. 12. In the second of *Jeremy*, and 12. we find the *Prophet* as it were in *furor* *sacro* (in a prophetic rage) *breaking* forth into this *Exclamation*. "Be *astonished*, "O ye *heavens*, be ye *horribly* afraid, be "very *desolate* saith the Lord! *What* ailes the *Prophet* to cry so loud?

to make the *heavens* resound his *Exclamation*? my people (saith he) have committed two *Great* evils, they have *Forsaken* me, that's the first. An heart of unbelief, is an *evil heart*, in departing from the living God.

It is true that the *Spirit* of God in the Scriptures, doth not usually descend to *Logical accuracy*, to the *quatenus*, or *Causality*, to the observation of the rules of *κατὰ πᾶν*, *καθ' αὐτό*, *καθόλου* *πρῶτον*.

And this makes it oft-times, harder to deal with men of *perverse* minds, then many do imagine. But the more aware this is, the more you will take notice of the *Providence*, when you shall consider, how *accurately*, and how *fully*, the Scripture hath determined that which is in Question.

In the 16. of *Joh. 8.* our Saviour *Joh. 16.8.* tells them, that the Spirit shall rebuke *3.18.* the world of *Sin*, of *righteousness*, of *19.* judgement: Of *Sin*, Because they believe not on him. *Joh. 3. 18.* he that believeth not is *Condemned*, because he believeth not. *Ἀυτὴ ἔστιν ἡ κρίσις*, the rejection of the Gospel is said to be
the

the very *Condemnation*, So expressly is, the *καὶ αὐτὸ*, delivered to us, (by *Causal* and *Identical* propositions) in the *Scripture*; Who is it now, that can *persuade* us, that the *Scriptures* do not affirm, any *Sinfulness* to be in *Infidelity*?

Yes verily! the *Scriptures* not only *teach* us, that *unbelief* is a *sin*, but they *teach* us likewise

6. The *Heinousness* and *Aggravation*, the *Sinfulness* and *Punishment* of this *Sin*.

It was *this* that brought all other *sin* into the *World*; and every *Premeditated sin* arises from it. It *hardens* the heart, and *fears* the *Conscience*, and makes it bid *defiance* to the *Lord of Glory*.

Concerning *David* we read in the *Psalms*, that once he said in his *Hymn* that all men are *liars*, did he *revoke* it when he was at *leisure*? No, the more he thought of it, the higher he proceeds, and becomes the more assured in this charge; Surely (saith he) Men of low degree are *Vanity*, and men of high degree are (not liars but) a *Lie*. Yet

one gives the *lie* to one of these *lyars*, it is the utmost provocation; it is the *stated word of defiance*, concluded fit to *justify* the *Duel* or the *Stab*. On the other side, God glories in this, that he is *not* a *man* that he should *lie*, that the strength of Israel will not *lie*, yet *infidelity* gives him the *lye*. "*He that believeth not God makes him a Liar.*" (1 Joh. 5. 10.)

7. I desire to know *what* is that *κεκρίσθαι*, whereby the *Heinousness* of any sin is to be estimated.

Is it the *denunciation* of *Future Vengeance*? "*The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire, taking Vengeance upon Unbelievers, and they shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord and from the presence of his power.*"

Is it *Old* or *New*, *Past*, or *present Instances* of Vengeance? Were not the *body* of this *people* *newly cut off* for *unbelief*? And of *ancient* dayes, whose were the *Carcasses* that fell in the *Wilderness*; and to whom did God swear in his

B wrath,

Heb. 3. *wrath*, that they should *not* enter into his *rest*, but to them that *believed not*?

Consider but the story, from whence the *Exhortation* of the Text arises. *How God was provoked through unbelief*. The text tells us, that he was *Moved*, he *was Tempted*, he was *Grieved*, he was *Provoked*, till he swore in his wrath —

Pf. 95. The words are taken out of the 95 Psalm, to which the 78. is parallel. *“ They were (saith the Psalmist) a stubborn and rebellious Generation; They tempted God, and spoke against him, “ Therefore the Lord heard this and “ was wroth: So a fire was kindled “ against Jacob and anger against Israel; “ Because they believed not in God, and “ trusted not in his Salvation — — “ When God heard this, he was “ wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel, “ he gave way to his Indignation, “ wrath, anger, displeasure and Foulness.*

I conceive, now the *first* Question to be stated, viz. *Whether* (according to the tenor of the Scripture) *Infidelity* were *sinful and dangerous*, in the time of

of the *delivery* of the *Scriptures* : I proceed to the second Question, viz. (*However it was in antient times.*)

2. Whether Infidelity, be not in such times as ours Excusable ?

My meaning is this: *Whether* (speaking according to Scriptural grounds, and reason) *Now* that *Miracles*, *extraordinary gifts* and *Prophecies* are *ceased*, *Infidelity* be *not* become *Excusable* (however it might be *Sinful* and *inexcusable* during the time when *Prophecies* and *Miracles* were in use ?)

The *first* verse of this Epistle (to the Hebrews) tells us what *powerful* and *noble motives* to *believe*, God had afforded to the *Fathers*.

God himself was pleased to speak to them, πολυμερῶς & πολυτρόπως, at sundry times, and in divers manners.

In the *Times* of the *Patriarchs*, *Judges*, *Kings*, and *Prophets* by the *Wayes* of *Visions*, *Dreams*, *Voices*, *similitudes*, *Urim*, and by divers *miracles* and *wonders*.

So likewise, for those that are here *exhorted* ; About the time of the *Writing* of this Epistle ; God had spoken

to them by his *Son* (the brightness of his Glory, the image of his person) And by the *Apostles*, to whom also he bare *Witness*, by mighty signes and wonders, by divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Now that *Such* men as *these*, who had so great *advantages* to bring them to *believe*, should be *severely punished* for *Infidelity*, I am perswaded there is hardly any man, but thinks it very just and reasonable.

That such as had *seen* the wonders of God, in *Egypt* and the *Wilderness*, so *manifestly miraculous*, so *often repeated*, and yet for *all this* would not *believe*, that *their Carcasses* should *fall* in the *Wilderness*.

That *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, who had *known* the miracles which had been done by the *Apostles*, should think to *couzen* the *Apostles*: it *deserved* the *Judgment* that *befell* them.

As for *our selves* had we lived in the times of *Miracles* or *Prophecies*, we doubt not but we should have *believed*. Or, as *Philip* said, *shew us the father*, and it *sufficeth*. Could we but once see a *miracle*

racle, or talk with one returning from the dead ; it should suffice, we would believe.

But *seeing* it is now *many* hundreds of yeares, Since these things are *ceased*, and we have nothing left us, *Præter miraculorum famam*; It we shall not believe the Gospel; by some it is openly pretend- ed, and by many it is secretly iamdged, that, in this case we may be Excused.

I could wish that the time would serve, *Clearly* to rid away this phantasm; In order to it, I shall briefly doe three things.

1. Shew that this *Phantastical* imagination is no new invention but that it hath of old, been the conceit of Abominable Hypocrites. 1.

2ly. I shall *inquire* a little into the grounds of this Conceit, and shew the *mistake* of those *suppositions*, into which it is resolved. 2.

3ly. I shall *shew*, that our *Savi- our* (Knowing the thoughts of men) hath taken *particular* care to prevent this *Imagination*; and hath clearly decided the matter in Question. 3.

I. Though the *present* age be fruitful in *inventions* tending this way, yet this hath been *Anticipated* by the *Wits* of former times.

LUC. 11. 47. In the 11 of *Luke* 47. We find the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, building the *Se-pulchers* of the *Prophets*, whom their fathers had killed.

MAT. 23. 30 If we would know, what they *pre-tended*, in so doing, we shall find it in the parallel place of *Matthew*. They said, if we had been in the *dayes* of our fathers, *we would not* have been *parta-ners* with them, in the *blood* of the *Pro-phets*.

That these men, *did not* believe the *Prophets*, it is *manifest*; *Christ* tells them, if they had believed the *Prophets*, they would have believed *him*: for they wrote of him,

But that they *would* have beleived the *Prophets*, (*and not* have murdered them) had they lived in their times, *this they pretend*: and it is very *probable* they had that *opinion*.

Yes Verily! had they lived in the *dayes* of *Miracles* and *Prophecies*, they would have believed, the very con-
ceit

ceit which is now Pretended!

But the *Truth* is, these men were *abominable Hypocrites*, and the cause of their *Unbelief*, was not the want of *miracles* and *Prophecies* but *Carnal prejudice*, and *interest*, and the *Vile affections* of their hearts. Did not *Christ* work *miracles*? Was not he that *Prophet* which was to come? Yet they took him, and with wicked hands they *slew him*, and brought upon themselves the *bloud* of *all the Prophets*.

But 2ly. If we shall *examine* the *bottom* of this fancy, and *resolve* it into its *Principles*, we shall finde that it supposes these things.

1. That the *want* of the sight of miracles, is *sufficient* to *Justifie unbelief*.

2. That to *live* in the *very age* of *miracles*, is apter to create *beleif*, then to be *born* and *educated*, in a *believing* nation, *after* the *world* hath been *convinced* by the *miracles* of *former* times (which is our *Case*.)

3. That the *bare sight* of miracles, is of it self alone, *sufficient* to create *be-*

lief, in every person that should see them.

Of which suppositions, the *first* is contrary to *common Reason*, and the two *later* are *contrary* to *Scriptural Reason*, and to the *experience* of the world.

1. *If the want of the sight of miracles* were enough to justify Infidelity, then for *every Dogma* to be believed, Every *Individual person*, were to *expect* the *sight of miracles*; which if it should happen, the *wonder* would *cease*, and *miracles* become *No miracles*, by the *frequency* of the performances of them, and so they would be *inept* to *create belief*.

Every work of nature, is in it self a *miracle*; Who would not think it easier to *recover a man*, (who had all his parts and humours already formed,) *from the dead*, then from that liquid principle whereof Job speakes, to *raise up flesh and skin, bones and sinews*: to *Advance* an understanding creature, capable of *Adoring* or *blaspheming* the maker of him? Yet *that is a miracle*, and *this is none*, onely through the *rarity* of one, and *frequency* of the other. Again

Job. 10. 10.

Again, if every one were to see miracles, the merit of faith would be taken away. *Jo. 20. 29.* "Jesus said unto Thomas, because thou hast seen -- thou hast believed, Blessed are they that have not seen, yet have believed. This for the first supposition.

2. The second is this, that to live in the very age of miracles, is apter to create a belief, then to live in a believing nation a good time after the times of Miracles.

But, contrary to this, we have instances both in Jews and Gentiles. After near 4000 years. How pertinaciously do the Jews adhere to Moses, against whom their fathers *Murmured*, and *rebelled*, notwithstanding the sight of all his miracles; and when he had wrought that great miracle upon *Corah* and for his rebellion, the next day they rebelled again.

And we find now the whole world, (especially the wiser part) Converted to Christianity, whereas the Apostles complain of the paucity of professors, and the Infidelity of the Jews, in the Age of Christ and his Apostles, was so great

great and *resolute* that it *hath* a *fatal* operation upon that nation unto this day.

I am sensible, that in the *Comparison* of *later ages* with the *dayes* of *miracles*, I may be thought *δραδὲν ἰσχυροῦ*, and to advance a paradox, where that I may not lean on my own understanding, I beseech you to *Consider*, our *Saviours decision* of the *Question* which we have in hand.

I *suppose*, I may take it for granted, that the *Condition* of the *Jews* in our *Saviours* time, was in respect of *Moses*, the same (as to the matter in *Question*) with *our Condition* in respect of *Christ*.

The *tradition* of the *law*, was accompanied with mighty *Signes* and *wonders*. And so was likewise the *tradition* of the *Gospel*.

In the times *succeeding* *Moses*, *God* for a *Season* continued the sensible manifestation of his presence, by *miracles*. So he did likewise in the *times succeeding* *Christ*.

But before the time of our *Saviour* both *miracles* and *Prophecies* had a long time

time ceased. We see not our Tokens Psalm 74.
9.
(saith the Psalmist) there is not one Prophet left; *as it is with us at this day.*

Onely, they had the *books* of *Moses* and the *Prophets*, *Just* so *Conveighed* and *propounded* to them, *as* our *Scriptures* have been to us.

So that, if the *Question* be proposed concerning *those Jews*; whether the *present miracles* of *Christ*, or the *complexion* of *Motives* which they had, to induce them to believe the writings of *Moses*, were apter to create belief, It is the same with our *Question*, Whether the *liveing* in *The time* of *Miracles*, or our *Motives*; are more powerful to believing. To determine which *Question*; we may observe; That the *Apostles* after the sight of *all* our *Saviours* *miracles*, Continued in unbelief, till he had opened unto them the *Scriptures*, of *Moses* and the *Prophets*. That after *many* *miracles*, he refers the *Jews* to the *searching* of the *Scriptures*; (bringing them *a notiori ad ignotius*.) And in the 5 of *John* and the 47. he decides this *Question* by another, Jo. 5. 47.
if

“ if ye do not believe the writings of
 “ *Moses, how shall ye believe my Words?*

Thus much concerning the 2 suppo-
 sition.

3. The 3 is this, that the *sight* of
 miracles, is of it *self alone*, *sufficient*
 to bring every person to believing.

We ought indeed to owne it, to the
 eternal Glory of our *Blessed Redeemer*,
 that the *Faith* of Christians is founded
 upon his *Miracles* as well as on his *Do-*
ctrine, and *example*. And he himself
 tells the *Jews*, that if he had not done
 miracles they should not have had sin
 (i. e. the Sin of *Infidelity*.) But Now
 to dream of *miracles*, and *hanker* after
 them; or to think to *Excuse* our *Infidelity*,
 for want of the sight of them,
 (as if that alone would certainly make
 believers of us all,) it argues that we
 have been *sloathful* readers of the *Scrip-*
tures.

It hapned to our Saviours *miracles* as
 it did to his *Preaching*; according to
 his *parable* of the *sower*. Some of them
 lighted upon hearts that were *honest*
 and good, and brought forth the fruit of
 believing. Others fell by the way side,
 or

or upon stony places, or among the Thornes.

The prepossession of their minds, by an expectation of a temporal Messiah, in the Rulers; The fear of persecution by them in the People; The Cares of the World, and deceitfulness of riches, The pleasures and lusts, to which the Austerities of the Gospel-rules, were opposit; and Many other prejudices, deeply rooted in the hearts of a pervers and froward Generation, prevailed against the sight of miracles; and None were more pervers and resolute unbelievers, then some of those, who had the Advantage of this great argument for believing.

If the sight of Miracles alone, were sufficient to produce belief, in all kinds of Spectators, certainly the Scribes and Pharisees, (who by their learning were able to Judge of a miracle,) the Countrymen and Kinsmen of Christ (with whom he was most Conversant,) should have been most Eminent in believing.

But behold the incantment of prejudice and Carnal Interest! In the 5. of Luke 21. The Pharisees and Doctors saw

Luc. 5. 21.

saw the *miracles* of Christ, and yet they concluded him a *Blasphemer*. And when he had healed, him that was borne blind; they (hypocritically) had the man give Glory to God, and said *they knew that Jesus was a sinner*.

Joh. 9. 24. *They turn'd his miracles into wantonness, tain'd themselves Just men, that they might tempt him, i. e. put a trick upon him. demanding a sign for a sight, onely to satisfy their wanton Curiosity.*

Ma. 13. 58. *As for his Countrymen, this Prophet had no honour there, he did not many miracles, among them, because of their unbeleef. His friends said he, was beside himself, and went to lay hold on him.*

Jo. 6. 10. *As for the People, In the 6 of John we find, that Christ fed 5000 men with 5 loaves and 2 small fishes, so that they said this is of a truth that Prophet. But the Very next day (ver. 22.) the Very men that had eaten of the loaves (26) Said unto him what sign shewest thou that we may beleive? what dost thou work! (30.) as if a miracle had not been a Sign!*

He

He wrought a miracle among the *Ma. 5. 17.*
Gadarens, and they besought him to be
gone. Others were offended at him,
and cast him out of their City. *The*
issue of all his miracles, was this; *Some* *Jo. 7. 12.*
said he was a good man, *Others* *Nay!*
but he *deceiveth the people.* And ma- *Jo. 10. 10.*
ny said he had a Devil and was mad.

Nay! when he hung upon the cross they
acknowledged his miracles, and jeered him
with them; He saved others, himself he
cannot save; let him do one more mira-
cle, let him come down from the Cross,
and we will beleive him: So *Vain* is
the pretence of those, who think to ex-
cuse their Infidelity, because they cannot
see a miracle! So false are the Grounds
of that opinion.

3. Briefly! to bring this Argument 3.
to an issue.

If it were granted to these persons,
to see a miracle, what kind of miracle
would they chuse, to convince their un-
derstandings, and settel them in religi-
on? We are here I confess *in loco*
Conjecturali, and no man can tell
what miracle another man would
chuse, but I am persuaded, that
which

which most men would agree upon, as most conducing to that purpose whereof we are speaking would be this; that to assure them of the *Immortality* of the Soul and of the rewards and *punishments* of the world to come, and to satisfy their *Curiosity* in some other doubts and *scruples*; They might once be allowed to see and converse with some one, that might rise from the dead who might resolve their *Questions*, concerning the condition of those that are in Hades.

3. I say then, that our Saviour who knew, what was in man, and needed not that any one should tell him *foreseeing* this *Phantastical* conceit, hath shewed the folly of it, and *preoccupied* this vain resort.

Luc. 16. 23. In the 16 of *Luke* 27. *Dives* makes it his request to *Abraham*; that he would send *Lazarus* from the dead; to testify to his brethren, those things which these men dream of.

Abraham refers them to the *Scriptures*, which were in the same manner recommended to them as our *Scriptures*

are to us. “*They have Moses and the
“ Prophets, &c. let them hear them.*
,, *He saith unto him, “ Nay fa-
“ ther Abraham, but if one went to
“ them from the dead, they would
“ believe.*

And he (*Abraham*) said “*If they
“ hear not Moses and the Prophets,
“ neither will they be perswaded though
one rose from the dead.*

*This I take to be a clear and a full de-
termination of the matter in Question;
And if any one should imagine, that
this determination was but Conjectural,* Ioh. 11.
Our Saviour afterward tries the *Experi-
ment*, and raises another *Lazarus* from
the dead.

What was the effect of this mans *co-
ming from the dead*, did it Convert the
High Priest or the Scribes the rulers or
the people; nay, but *from that very
day* they took counsel together how
they might put *Jesus* to death. And 53.
the *Chief Priests* Consulted, how they
might put *Lazarus* to death Also.

*Upon these Considerations; we may in-
fallibly Conclude, that Infidelity in Such
times as ours, is no more excusable,*
C then

then it was in the *dayes* of *Christ* or his *Apostles*; the times of *miracles* and *pbrophesies*.

So much of the *first Supposition*, in the *Caveat* of the text, the *Sinfulness* of *Infidelity*, in *General* at *all times*, And the *Inexcusableness* in *our times*, which makes it our *Duty* to take heed of it;

II.

I pass to the *second supposition*, concerning the *Danger* of *falling into it*, which makes it our *concernment* and *Interest* to beware of it. For if this be clear, the *Exhortation* will be *powerful*, *take heed brethren*, &c.

Now, the *Danger* of *falling into infidelity*, is in it self so *conspicuous*, and made so *sensible* by every day's *experience*, that I wish the *proof* of it were *difficult*, so as to *Justify* a *studious* & *laborious* demonstration of it.

At once, to *shorten my discourse*, and to *remove* the *suspicion* of any *Satyrical* reflexion upon those that hear me; I shall shew, that the *Greatest Advantages*, have not preserved the *best of men*, from sometimes falling into *Infidelity*. Take heed therefore brethren.

The

The greatest *Helps* and *Advantages* against unbelief. I conceive to be these ensuing.

1. *Evidences of Gods Presence.* 2. Or these lighting on a good understanding. 3. At least upon the *Ablest* of men. 4. Such as have held *Communion* with God. 5. Or have been eminent for the habit and exercise of faith. 6. Or these with *warnings* to prevent the Danger of falling. 7. And those reiterated. Yet all these, have not preserved good men from sometimes falling. A word of each.

1. First then, to begin with the persons in the Context, What greater *Evidences* of the *Presence* of God can be Imagined, then they enjoyed; In *Egypt* in their passage over the red Sea, in the *Wilderness*, "my presence, saith "God, shall go along with you, They were conducted by a *Pillar* of a *Cloud*, &c. they were *Supported*, and *Corrected* by *Visible* and *palpable* instances of Gods power and presence. Yet they tempted and grieved the Spirit of God, by their *Infidelity*, for "they believed not for all his *Wondrous Works*.

2. But these *Fewes* were a *dull and stupid* people. If God should once manifest himself, to a *wise and understanding* person (Such as we take ourselves to be) We may think it impossible to fall into unbelief.

I suppose it will be *no disparagement* to these *Objectors*, to say, that *Solomon* might be as *Wise and Knowing*, as *Wary and Philosophical* as *they*. And as for the *manifestation* of Gods presence, the Scripture tells us Expressly, that *God appeared* to him at *Gibeon*. Where he made a *promise* to him which he performed.

Yet *Solomon* fell into the *grossest Infidelity*: to think there were *Gods and Goddesses*, To worship *Asteroth*, the *Goddeſs* of the *Sidonians*, and *Milcom* the *Abomination* of the *Ammonites*.

3. But it may be yet *Objected*, that *Solomon* did this in the *Dot age* of his years, and his *Dotage* upon his *Idolatrous wives*, which turned away his heart, but that it *could not* have proceeded from him, before his *understanding* was empayred.

Be-

Behold then a *greater* then *Solomon*! even *Adam* in his *full strength* when he was *newly* made after the *similitude* of *God*, a little lower then the *Angels*. *God* several times appeared to him in the *Garden*; Yet he fell through *unbeleif*, and drew all his *posterity* into his *ruine*.

4. But *Adam* though he had *perfection* of *Nature* yet he wanted *Grace*, whereby he might have held *Communion* with *God*, which having been once enjoyed, would for ever have kept him from *infidelity*, or *deliberate sin*, which alwayes *proceeds* from it.

Consider then the case of *David*! Salm. 16.
of whom it is said, that the *Spirit* of ^{13.}
the Lord God came upon him; That Psal. 89. 4.
God himself made a *Covenant* with him, and *Sware* unto him by his *holiness*, that he would not fail him.

And as for *David* who was like unto him, for *Devotion* and *Zeal*, for *spiritual Communion* and *intercourse* with *God*? He was the *sweet singer* of *Israel*; and how often do we find, his *Spirit* *inebriated*, and transported, in the

Celebration of his *divine* and *ravishing* enjoyments.

Yet we find him falling from all this height; and great and terrible was his fall; he went *mourning* for it all his days, and bowed down his head continually.

5. But perhaps it may be thought, that though *David* was an Excellent man, yet seeing his Eminency lay not in the gift of *Faith*, but in *Zeal*, or in some other *Grace*, the danger may not yet be so very considerable.

Behold then even *Abraham*: the Darling of the almighty, who conversed with God as a man converseth with his Friend: to whom God communicated his presence in *Dreams*, in *Visions*, in *Apparitions*, πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως.

He was imbued with the *Habit* of Faith. he exerted it in the noblest exercise; he manifested it in the heroical degree; so that he became the Father of the Faithful.

Yet once we find him offending (tripping) at this stone of stumbling; Equivocating through unbelief.

6 But

6. But all these instances were during the *Ancient Dispensation*, when the *Communication* of the presence of God was *more Obscure*; before the *fulness* of time was come, when the *word* was made *flesh* and dwelt amongst men; and they saw his glory as the glory of the only begotten Son of God.

Besides! we do not find that they were particularly and distinctly warned of their danger, which may lessen the Wonder of the fall.

Consider then the Case, of *Peter*, the first of the *Apostles*. He had been closely conversant with *Christ* during all the time of his *Ministry*. Was a witness of his *miracles*, saw his *Transfiguration*, Heard the Voice which came to him from the *Excellent glory*, saying *this is my beloved Son* — Psal 1, 19.

As for his *faith*, he it was, that made that *Confession*, upon which the the *Christian Church* is founded. And *Christ* had prayed for him that his *faith* should not fail.

He was a *Valiant man*; and he *Undertook* that though he died, he would neither forsake, nor deny, his Master.

When Christ forewarns him, *plainly* and *punctually*, that his *faith* would *fail* him. That *very night*, before a *certain hour*; So that it was impossible he *should be surprised*.

You know his *Undertakings* and of his *Failings* it is unnecessary to speak.

7. I know nothing now that can be *alleged*, against the general *propensity* of all men to *Unbeleif*, but this, that *Peter* was now *single and alone*, that he *failed* only *this time*; when he was *enviromd* with *Bills and Staves* and in *Danger* of his *Life*.

Wherefore let us call to mind the *Case* of *all the Apostles*, in the great *Foundation* of our *Faith* the *Article* of *Christs Resurrection*. When these *temptations* were *away*.

The *resurrection* of the *dead* was in *those times* so commonly *believed*, that it was conceived of *Christ*, that he was *one* of the *Old Prophets* risen from the *Dead*, and *Herod* said he was *John the Baptist* risen from the *dead*.

Of the *resurrection*, the *Apostles* had seen *Experiments*, in *Lazarus*, and in the

the bodies of the *Saints* which arose.

Concerning Christs *resurrectio*, how plainly and often were they forewarned, After he was risen, how often were they told of it. Yet how grosely and often did they fail.

In the 8 of *Mark* 31 Christ tells his *Mar. 8. 31.*

"*Disciples*, that he should be killed,

"and the 3 day he would rise again. He *32. Mat. 3. 7.*

"spake this saying openly; So open- *62.*

"ly that the *Jews* took notice of it (this *Mat. 26. 31.*

deceiver said that the third day he would rise again) moreover he promised them plainly that after he was risen, he would go before them into *Galilee*, and appointed them a certain *Mountain* where they should see him. *Mar. 16. 13*

Yet after he was risen; *Mary Magdalen* told them that he had appeared to her. But they believed not *Mary Magd. Joanna*, and *Mary the Mother of James*, told them the same, But their Speech seemed to them as *Idle* tales. *13.*

The 2 *Disciples* told the rest, that he had appeared to them going to *Emmaus*, but they believed them not.

He appeared in the midst of ten of them at once, shewed them his hands and

and *his side*, But they *believed not* for joy.

Luc. 24. 41.

Mat. 28. 7.

Christ when appeared to the Women, bade them tell the Disciples and *Peter*, that according to his promise, they should see him in *Galilie*.

17

And the 11. Disciples went into *Galilie*, to a mountain which *Jesus* had appointed them, *And when they saw him*, they *Worshiped*, But some doubted.

Mar. 16. 14

So that Christ, almost in his last words, *Upbraided* them with their *Unbelief*—because they believed not them who *had seen* him, after he was risen.

So prone are even the *best of men*, after their highest attainments, under the *best advantages*, to fall sometime into *Infidelity*! So great is the danger of *Unbelief*!

It is true indeed, that *all these*,
Mic. 7. 8. might say with the Prophet, Rejoyce not against me O mine enemy, for though I fall, I shall arise again. Yet
“all these things are written for our learning, that he that *thinketh* he standeth, may take heed least he fall. If these things have been done to the green tree,

tree, what may be done to the *dry*? If the *worthies* and the *mighty* have *fallen* (how have the *mighty* fallen?) ought not the *feeble* to take care? Yes certainly they ought.

And to use all means to prevent their falling, which is the *third thing*, supposed in the Caveat, and expressed in the words following “Take heed brethren least, &c. Exhort one another daily— III.

Now the *Meanes* to prevent the falling into *Infidelity* are the *Arguments* evincing the *truth* of the *Gospel* which are very *numerous*. Whereof I cannot now speak particularly.

The Apostle in this Epistle makes use of 2. sorts *viz.*

- From { 1. Scriptures of the Old Testament.
2. Common Reason whereof I shall speak a little.

The *Argument* from *Reason* is delivered in the 2. Chap. v. 3. 4.

“The Gospel was delivered by the Lord,
“and

"and confirmed (to us) by them that
"heard him.

" God also bearing them Witness
" with Signs and wonders , and divers
" miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost,

God bare witness to
Christ the Author of the Gospel:
And to the Apostles, the Promulgers
of the Gospel. Wherefore it is to be
believed.

The *Antecedent* of this *Enthymem* is
the sum of what I shall deliver.

Io. 8. 13.

" When the *Pharisees* said unto
" Christ, thy Record is *not true*, be-
" cause thou bearest record of thy self.
" I am one (saith Christ) that bear re-
" cord of my self, and the Father that
" sent me, beareth witness of me.

18.
25. 26.
27.

Moreover he tells the *Disciples* that
the *Comforter* should testify of him. And
ye also shall bear witness, because ye
have been with me from the beginning.

So that beside the Witness of the
Apostles, the Gospel had the *Attestati-*
on of all the persons of the Trinity: viz.

Of the } 1. Father,
 } 2. Son,
 } 3. Holy Ghost.

I. God

1. God the Father bore witness to his Son; and that he did, by 1. *Visible Signes*, and 2. *Audible Voices*, 3. *by Mission of Angels*, 4. *by Cooperating in his Miracles*, &c.

1. At his *Nativity*, a new *Star* appeared. At his *Baptism* they saw the *heaven* opened, and the *Spirit* sent from the *Father* in the *visible* shape of a *Dove* and lighting upon him. Before his *Passion*, he was *transfigured* in their sight. And At it the *Sunne* was *eclipsed* when the *Moon* was full, the *Vail*, the *Rocks*, rent, So that the *Centurion* said, Surely this man was the *Son of God*, *Bodies of Saints* were seen of many, all these were *visible* signs.

2. As for the בן קור (the daughter of the Voice) In his *Baptism* Lo! Mar. 3. 17. 17. 5. *voice* from *heaven*, Saying, This is my beloved Son—At his *Transfiguration* a *Voice* came out of a *cloud*, which said, This is my beloved Son — hear him. A little before his death, as he was *Praying* “*Father, glorifie thy Name*, Io. 12. 28 There came a *voice* from *heaven*, Saying, “*I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.*

3. For

3. For mission of Angels by the Father, We find them still ready upon all occasions from before his Coming down, to the time of his Ascension into Heaven.

Luc. 1. 16. Before his Conception, the Angel
19. Gabriel appeared to Zachary and to
Mar. 1. 20. Mary, before his Nativity to Joseph saying fear not Joseph. At the time of his
Luc. 2. 9 Nativity a whole Chorus appeared to the
31. Shepherds. In his Infancy an Angel
Mar. 2. 13 appeared twice to Joseph, admonishing
1.9. 20. him of his going to Egypt and his return from thence.

4 11. In his Adult age they ministered to
Luc. 22. 43 him in his hunger; Before his death,
Mar. 28. 2. they strengthened him in his Agony;
Mar. 16. 6. After it, they rolled away the stone
Jo' 20. 12. from his Sepulcher; They declared his
Ac. 1. 16. resurrection; And in his Ascension, they stood by, and foretold his coming again to Judgement. Ye men of Galilee why stand ye gazing? This same Jesus —

4. The Father cooperated with him, according to that of our Saviour the father worketh hitherto and I work. — &c.

These

These are some of the *Attestations* of the **Father**.

2. *Christ bore witness of himself.* And ^{2.} this he did, by *proving* himself to be the *Messiah*; viz. by *fulfilling* all the *Prophecies* relating to the *Person* or *Offices*; 1 *he Life*, and the *Death* of the *Messiah*.

His *Generation* was such as cannot be declared, he was born at *Bethlem*, of the tribe of *Juda*, of the *Family* of *David*, about 490. years after the return from *Captivity*. When the *Scepter* was just now departed from *Juda*.

He performed not only the *Substance* of the *Prophecies* but all the *Circumstances* foretold, Concerning the *Life* and *Death* of the *Messiah*.

He was to be a *Prophet*, and so he was. The *Spirit* of the *Lord* anointed him to *preach*, and he spake as never man spake. He foretold many things to come, they all bare him witness.

2. He was to be a *King* and so he was. His *Name* was *Wonderful*; his *Power* was shewen througout the *universal System* of the *World*, the *Angels* good

good and evil, the *Heavens, Elements, Plants, Fishes, Brutes, Health and Sickness, Life and Death*, were all obedient unto his *Word*.

3. He was to be a *Priest* and so he was. He made an *Attonement* by his *Obedience*, and by his *sufferings* to the least *punctilio* (to the taking of a little *Vinegar*) and when all things were fulfilled, He cryed with a loud voice *τετέλεσται* it is finished, and he bowed his head and gave up the Ghost.

Moreover, for the *Justification* of his Gospel (and that he might leave no place for *Infidelity*;) he rose again from the dead, appeared to many *Convinced them* by all their senses; *They saw him, They heard him, they felt his hands and his side, They Eat and Drank with him, They Conversed with him* 40. dayes; He was seen by more then 500. at once; and (lastly,) in the sight of *Many* of them, he *Ascended Visibly* into Heaven.

These were some of the *Testimonies*, which our *Lord Christ* bore to himself.

3. The time would fail me, if I should speak.

Speak of all the Testimonies given by the *Holy Spirit*.

In his *Conception*, to *Mary*, fulfilling the Promise of *Gabriel*.

Before his *Nativity* to *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, in his *Infancy* to *Simeon* and *Hanna*, In his *Baptism* to *John*. I knew "him not, saith *John*, but he that sent me to baptize, said unto me, upon whom "thou shalt see the *Spirit* descending "and resting on him, *that is he*: and I saw the *Spirit* descending: *Throughout* his whole *Ministry*, till his *Death*, the *Spirit* gave witness to him.

Moreover, In his *Resurrection* he was declared the *Son of God*, with power by the *Holy Ghost*. After his *Ascension*, the *Holy Ghost* fulfilled all his undertakings, In that *Grand Manifestation* at *Pentecost*; at the time and place which *Christ* had undertaken for; A *manifestation* made to all the *Senses*, and to men of every nation under heaven, *Parthians* — besides a Multitude of other Instances. Rom. 1. Act. 2. 5.

Such were the *Attestations* given to *Christ* (the *Author* and finisher of our faith).

D

2. And

2. *And for the Apostles (the Promulgers of it) Besides the Change of their Spirits from darkness to light, Whereby they were led out of Ignorance and Infidelity, into all Truth. And from torpid and pusillanimous persons, during the life of their Master, they became, when he was dead, the most active and magnanimous in the world. (I say, besides this Change) They had bestowed upon them, All things necessary (either for their, 1. Own Assurance, Or for the 2. Conviction of the World. (Concerning the truth of the Gospel which they delivered.)*

1. As for *themselves*, Besides the Conversation with their Master before and after his Resurrection; they had 1. *Apparitions of Angels*. And to one of them *Christ himself* appeared after he was ascended to his father.

2. They had the *Bath Kol*. (Voices from Heaven) In the 9 of the Acts, We finde a Voice from Heaven maintaining a Dialogue with *Paul*; and at another time, a voice saying to *Peter*, *Arise Peter, Kill and Eat*.

3. They had *extatical Visions*.
Peter

Peter was in a trance (Act. 10. 10, 19.) Act. 22. 17
Paul rapt up to the third heaven.

4. *They had monitory Dreames*, Paul saw a man in a *Dream*, saying unto him, Come into Macedonia and help us.

5. *They had Impulses of the Spirit*; Act. 16 9.
So Paul was *forbid* by the *Spirit*, to preach the Word in Asia:

II. And for the *Conviction* of the *unbelieving World*

They had *diversities of gifts* and Cor. 12.
Different Administrations. To one was given the *Word of Wisdom*, to another the *Word of Knowledge*, to another *Faith*, to another the gift of *Healing*, to another *Miracles*, *Prophecies*, *Discerning of Spirits*, The gift of *Tongues*.

As it is in the words which I quoted,
“*God bare them witness with gifts of*
“*the Holy Ghost, and with signes and Wonders*; and that he did, *so far*, that I shall be justified by *Christ* himself, if I shall affirm, that the *Apostles* after his death, did *greater* miracles than he himself did in his life.

Of the *same kind* with our Saviours, some they performed, by means, having an appearance of greater strange-

ness, (Christ healed by his *touch*, his *word* his *spittle*, Peter by his *shadow*, Paul by *Handkerchiefs* taken from his body.) But one great thing there was, wherein they exceeded; The Great and Manifest, and frequent Effusions of the Spirit, The Reception of it upon themselves, the communication of it to others, by Prayer, Preaching, Laying on of Hands; By these it was that the unbelieving world was convinced, and even Simon Magus himself, It is by the power and Vertue of those effusions that we are here met together at this time, that the World continues Christian at this day. And these are some of those standing means and Arguments, whereby the Propensity of our hearts to Infidelity may be overcome; and faith may be begotten, confirmed, recovered at this day: These are therefore to be revolved, Exhort one another dayly. To come therefore to a Conclusion.

My text it self is an Application, by way of Exhortation, Exhortations are enforced by Reasons of Duty and Concernment, and these I have hitherto endeavoured to lay before you.

If

If indeed there were no Sinfulness in Infidelity, Or, If in such times as ours, it were excusable. If there were no danger of falling into it, or no means left to remedy or prevent it; It would then indeed be to little purpose to Exhort men to beware.

But if the state of all these things is otherwise, if that be plain and evident; agreeable to Scripture, to Reason and to Experience; If the Speaker hath not beaten the Air, nor the hearers been careless and inattentive, I know not what can be required, to enforce and sharpen the exhortation.

If the time would suffer it, and I were speaking to a Common or Injudicious Auditory, I might think my self concerned, after all that hath been spoken to the understanding, to Apply my discourse to your affections, I should take unto me the various forms of Application used in this Epistle. I would Reprove, Rebuke, Exhort; I would cry aloud, and would not spare. I would lift up my voice like a Watchmans trumpet, warning you from the Lord, concerning that Spirit of irreligion and infidelity

which is said to have overspread the land.

I would *take* to my self a *Lamentation*, yea it should be for a *Lamentation*, for the *Professors of Infidelity*, and the *Infidelity of Professors*, every where. But I may not now be permitted to enlarge upon these things. I may onely pray to God to give you understanding in all things, and beseech you earnestly to consider what hath been spoken, *Concluding* in the words of the Text, *Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. Exhort one another dayly* —

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A

2

SERMON

Against the

693. c. 17
2

ARTIS-SCRIPTURISTS.

ALSO

Another concerning the

Sinfulness, Danger, and Remedies

OF

INFIDELITY.

Preached at

WHITE-HALL.

K. Lord BY
SETH Lord Bishop of Sarum.

LONDON,

2/15

Printed by J. M. for James Collins, at the
Kings-Head in Westminster-Hall,
MDC LXX.

STEFAN

ADAM STEPHENSON



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A
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February 20. 16⁶⁹₇₀.

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2 Tim. 3. 16.

All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God.

IN the *verse* preceding, it is said concerning the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*, that they are able to make a man wise unto salvation, *διὰ πίστεως ἡμετέρας ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ* (by the faith which is in Jesus Christ) : And it follows immediately, *All scripture, &c.*

'*H πίστις* (the Faith) is often by a Metonymy taken for the *Gospel*, which is the *Object* of the *Faith* of Christians. We read often of the ^a *Preaching*, and ^b *Hearing* of Faith; ^c of the *Analogue* of Faith, ^d the *common Faith* ^e which was once delivered ^f to the *Saints* (in the *preaching* of ^g *Christ*, and the *Writings* of his *Evan-*
gelists and *Apostles*) and so I conceive it is to be taken in this place.

A 3

So

So that the *meaning* of the *whole* is this, The *Old Testament* understood and expounded according to the *Analogy* of the *New*, is able to make a man *wise*. And the *Pen-men* of the *Canonical Books* of the *Old Testament* (wherein *Timothy* had been instructed *in Scriptures*) and of the *Books* of the *New Testament* (which except those of *S. John* were extant before the writing of this *Epistle*) were inspired and directed by the *spirit* of *God*.

The words of the *Text* are an entire *Proposition*, asserting the *Divine Authority* of the *Canon* of *Scripture*; and my endeavour shall be at this time to prove the *truth* of that *Proposition*. Wherein, that I may proceed with all plainness and clearness, I shall premise two words by way of *Petition*,
Precaution.

I. By way of *Petition*, I suppose and take for granted;

1. The great principle of the power of *God*, and his providence in governing the world.

2. That our *Body* of *Canonical Books*

Books of the Old Testament, is the same with that which was in Use in the time of Christ and his Apostles, And our body of the New Testament the same which was anciently received in the Church. So that what shall be proved of those, is applicable to the Original Scripture used in our time.

3. *That those Books of New Testament whose Authors were not anciently questioned, were Written by those Authors whose Name they bear. And that those few others which were sometimes questioned by some particular Churches, and afterward Universally received, contain in them no one point of Faith or Manners dissentient from the Contents of those Books which were never questioned.*

2. *By way of Precaution and Admonition I must intreat you to take notice, that I shall not now meddle with*

the Controversies concerning *Apo-crypha, Translations, Keri and Chetib, Hebrew points, various Lectiōns, dubious Authors or parts of Scripture.*

But my endeavour at this time shall be to *Affert* the *Divine Authority* of the *body* and *substance* of the *Original Books* of the *Canon* of the *Old* and *New Testament*: And this not in the way of *common place*, but in a particular *Examination* or *Refutation* of the most dangerous *Opinions* of the *Anti-scripturists*, which are these.

I. Of those who pretend to believe the *truth* of the *New Testament*, and yet they deny the *Divine Authority* of the *Old*.

II. Of those who pretend to believe the *truth*, but deny the *divine Authority* of the *New Testament*.

III. Of such as pretend to believe *matters of fact* to have been truly *related* in the *New Testament*, but do not believe the *truth* of the *Doctrinal* parts relating to *Faith* and *Manners*.

IV. Such as *deny* the *truth* of the *Relation* of *matters of Fact* in the
New

New Testament, and in consequence reject the whole *Body of Scripture*. Of these as briefly and plainly as I can.

I. The first Opinion is of those, who *pretending to believe the Truth of the New Testament, deny the Divine Authority of the Old Testament*. The *Severians*, and the *Manichees*, *Basili-des*, and *Carpocrates* of old: The *Catubaptists* of later times, some *Anabaptists*, *Antinomians*, and other Fanatical Sectaries amongst our selves.

In opposition to these, I shall shew, that supposing the *truth* of the *New Testament*, the *Divine Authority* of the *Old Testament* is to be acknowledged: Because the *Divine Authority* of the *Old Testament* is asserted by *Christ* and his *Evangelists* and *Apostles* in the *New*.

I. Next to the *Redemption* of the *world*, the great business which *Christ* had to do upon *Earth*, was to *Convince* men that he was the *Messias*, and so to assert his *Legislative Authority*. And the great Argument which he used

used for the conviction of the world was this.

All the *Marks* and the entire *Character* of the Messiah, and of his Actions and Passions, were *prefigured* and *foretold* by the *Law* and the *Prophets*, and the *Psalms*, *i. e.* in the *Volume* of the *Old Testament*.

And *all things* foretold or prefigured concerning the Messiah, were accomplished by *himself*.

So that though the *great Works* of Christ, and the *purity* and excellency of his *Doctrine*, and of his *Life* were of themselves *sufficient* to *justify* the Introduction of his *Law* into the World, yet he was pleased to resolve (as it were) his own Authority into the *Divine Authority* of the *Old Testament*, and to make use of those other manifestations of himself, in a coordination with that principle.

And *therefore* we find him still pressing the *Jews* with this, *that* if they did believe the *Writings* of *Moses*, and their other Scriptures, they must of necessity believe *him* also.

Joh. 5. 46. *Moses* wrote of me (saith he) where-

wherefore, did ye believe *Moses*, ye would believe *me*. The *Scriptures* *testifie* of me, therefore search them diligently, *ἱσχυράτε τὰς γραφάς*. For the attaining of everlasting life he refers the Lawyer to the Law, *What is written in the Law? how readest thou?* For the avoiding of the place of torments, he makes Abraham refer the Relations of *Dives* to *Moses* and the *Prophets*. Joh. 5. 39.
Luk. 10. 26
Luk. 16. 29.

In all his *Disputations* with the Pharisees and Sadduces, the Lawyers and the Scribes, he makes his appeal to the *Scriptures* of the Old Testament. And lest any one should think that in all this he did only argue *ad homines* (that disputing with the Jews he only proceeded upon their own Hypothesis) we find him in the course of his Ministration positively asserting, that the *Scriptures* *must* be fulfilled; that they cannot be broken; that he came not to destroy the Law and the *Prophets*, but to fulfill them; and that Heaven and Earth shall pass away, before one jot or tittle of these should perish, until all was

Mar. 14. 49
Joh. 10. 35
Mar. 3. 31
Mar. 5. 18

was fulfilled. Thus he asserted the Authority of the Old Testament before his death.

And after his *Resurrection* he made a real demonstration that the Old Testament was given by inspiration of God ; for *on the day* of his Resurrection, falling into company of two of his Disciples, going to *Emmaus* : He began at *Moses* and all the *Prophets*, and expounded to them *in all the Scriptures* the things concerning himself.

And afterward when the Eleven were come together, as a *recapitulation of this his method*, and that he might instruct his Disciples in it, he said unto them, *These were the words*
 44. *which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms (in the Volume of Old Testament) concerning me.* He opened their understandings, and said, *thus it is written, and thus it behoved* : And as a short Idea of what they were to do, he tells them,
 and

and ye are *Witnesses* of these things.

2. In pursuance of this method we find the *Evangelists* very curious, and very frequent in observing the accomplishment of the Prescriptions of the Old Testament, reciting sometimes the speeches of Christ, saying, that he did such, or such a thing, to the end that the Scriptures might be fulfilled: *I will not eat of the fruit of the Vine till all things be fulfilled.*

Sometimes in their own Persons observing the accomplishment of particulars, and noting either particular portions of Scriptures which were fulfilled, or the fulfilling of the Scriptures cited at large, without any particular Quotation. Thus the Evangelists writing of the ^a Concepti-^{22.} on, ^b Nativity, ^c Name of Christ, ^d of^{Mat. 2. 15} his coming out of *Egypt*, ^e dwelling at^{Mat. 2. 23} *Nazareth*, ^f migration to *Capernaum*, ^g riding to *Jerusalem*: Say that these^{4. 14.} things were done that the Scriptures^{21. 4.} (or the saying of the Prophet) at large might be fulfilled: So likewise for the circumstances of his Passion, the

^{Mat. 26.} the ^h flight of his Disciples, ⁱ casting
^{56.} lots upon his Garments, ^k Vinegar gi-
^{27. 35.} ven him to drink, ⁱ piercing his side,
^{Joh. 19. 24} bones remaining unbroken, &c.
^{Joh. 19.} ^{29.} Other times they note the particu-
^{37.} lar Prophet, Christ ⁿ healed Diseases,
^{Mat. 8. 17} ^{36.} spoke in Parables, and that the say-
^{Mat. 13.} ing of *Isaiah* the Prophet might be
^{15.} fulfilled. ^p When *Herod* slew the
^{Mat. 2. 17} Children, then was fulfilled that
 which was spoken by *Jeremy* the
 Prophet, *Rachel weeping for her Chil-*
dren, &c. and once we find a quota-
 tion of the second Psalm, and the
 like : *This for the Evangelists.*

3. Lastly, the Divine Authority
 of the Old Testament is asserted by
 the *Apostles* : Whom we find every
 where in their Writings, citing the
 Testimonies of the ^q Law and the
^{Gal. 3. 10} ¹ *Prophets*, and the ^r *Psalms* ; appealing
^{Act. 7. 42.} to them, ^s what saith the Scripture?
^{Act. 1. 28.} ^{8c 13. 33.} the Scripture hath concluded *so* or
^{Rom. 4. 2.} ² *so* : Arguing out of them, oft times
^{Gal. 3. 22.} directly ; thus not only the Apostles
^{Acts 18.} but ^{24. 28.} *Apollos* mightily convinced the
^{Jam. 4. 5.} Jews, sometimes *ab absurdo*, ² do ye
 think the Scripture speaks in vain?

In a word, the Apostles followed the way and method which their Master taught them; they asserted that the Gospel was ^apromised by the Prophets, ^{Rom. 1. 12}
^bwitnessed by the Law and the Pro- ^{Rom. 3. 21}
^cphets: ^dby all the Prophets. Affirm- ^{Act. 13.}
^eing of themselves, that they believed ^{18. & 10.}
^fall things written in the Law and in ^{Act. 24.}
the Prophets: and that they continu- ^{14.}
ed testifying and saying ^gno other ^{Act. 26.}
things than the Prophets and Moses did ^{22.}
say should come.

Finally, lest any place should be left for doubting concerning any part of the Old Testament, the Apostles have expressly asserted concerning the ^hLaw, that it is holy, just, and good; ^{Rom. 7.}
ⁱthat the Prophets are holy, and ^jthe ^{12.}
^kScriptures holy; that they are the ^{Act. 3. 21.}
^lOracles of God, ^mlively Oracles; that ^{Tim. 3. 15}
ⁿGod spake by the Prophets; ^othat ^{Rom. 3. 22}
^pholy men of God spake as they were ^{Act. 7. 38}
moved by the Holy Ghost. Lastly, ^{Act. 3. 21}
(in the Text) that the ^{2 Pet. 1.}
^qwherein Timothy had been instituted ^{21.}
by his Mother, were given by inspi- ^{2 Tim. 3.}
ration of God. ^{16.}

This is the sense of the New Testa-
ment

ment concerning the *Old Testament*; supposing therefore the *Truth* of the *New Testament*, the *Divine Authority* of the *Old Testament* is to be acknowledged, contrary to the first Opinion of the Anti-scripturists.

II. The Second *Anti-scriptural* Opinion is of those who pretend to believe the *Truth*, but they deny or doubt the *Divine Authority* of the *New Testament*, either of the whole body of the *New Testament*, or at least of that part which delivers the *Speeches and Writings* of the *Apostles*.

Of this sort there are said to be many, who by the power and influence of their *Education* are restrained from denying or disbelieving the *Truth* of the *New Testament*, and yet through the infelicity of corrupt conversation are fallen from that *Veneration* which is due to writings supposed to be of *Divine Authority*.

For the *History* of the *New Testament* they have the same respect which they have for *Tacitus* or *Salust*, or some such other *History*; for the *Mystery*

stery of the Gospel, the same which they have for some parts of *Plato*, or remnants of *Pythagoras*. For the *practical parts*, the same which they have for some parts of *Cicero* or *Seneca*, or *Epictetus*. All which writings they believe to be *true*, but no man believes them to be *Divine*. And some there are who pretend a great *veneration* for the *speeches* of *Christ*, but have a *meaner esteem* for the *words*, and *writings* of the *Apostles*.

In *opposition* to these *Opinions*, I shall shew, that *supposing* the *words* of *Christ* and the *Apostles* to be *True*, it will follow, that they are to be esteemed to be of *Divine Authority*.

Because Christ and the Apostles did profess and declare, that what they delivered to the world, was of *Divine Authority*.

And *because our Lord Christ* did undertake not only for *himself*, but for the *Inspiration* of his *Apostles* also.

I. In the examination of the *next Opinion*, I shall be obliged to lay before you some of the *evidences* of *Divine Authority* in *Christ* and his

Against the

Apostles, here it is *sufficient* to produce their *assertions* of it.

The *time* of our Lord Christs *ministration* (betwixt three and four years) was spent in *preaching* and *working*, and his *Authority* was often *questioned*.

In *Luke* 20. 1. and in the * paral-
 * Mat. 21. 23. lel places, *While he was in the Tem-*
 Mar. 11. 27 *ple teaching the People, and preach-*
ing the Gospel, the Chief Priests and
the Scribes and the Elders came upon
him, saying, tell us by what Autho-
rity thou dost these things (preachest
to the people) and who gave thee
that Authority?

Knowing the perverseness of their minds, he was *not* pleased to *gratifie* them at *that time* with a *direct* answer, but confounded them with a question concerning the Baptism of *John*.

But at Other times, upon Other occasions, we find the Divine Authority of his teaching abundantly declared and asserted by him.

* Joh. 14. 6 * *I am the way, the truth and the*
 * Joh. 6. 63 *life: † The words which I speak unto*
 you

you they are *spirit*, and they are *life*. * *The words which I speak* I^a Joh. 14. 10. speak not of my *self*, but of the *Father* which dwelleth in me. ^d *My* ^d Joh. 7:16 *Doctrine* is not *mine*, but *his* that sent me. * *I do nothing* of my *self*, ^e Joh. 8. 28. but as my *Father* hath taught me so I speak. ^f *I have* not spoken of my ^f Joh. 12. *self*, but the *Father* that sent me, he 49. gave me a *Commandment* what I should say, and what I should speak. * *Whatsoever* I speak therefore, even ^g Joh. 12. 50. as the *Father* said unto me, so I speak. ^h *Heaven* and *Earth* shall pass away, ^h Mat. 24. 35. but my words shall not pass away.

Thus did our Saviour assert the Divine Authority of his Words.

2. And so likewise the Apostles are very frequent in asserting the Divine Authority of the things which they delivered.

In the 15. of the *Acts*, we find them assembled about the question of *Circumcision*; and they accounted it no robbery to entitle their Decrees to the Holy Ghost, *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, v. 18.*

Nor do they pretend to revelation

Against the

when gathered in *Council only*, but each one severally for himself.

S. Peter professes of *himself*, that he
 1 Pet. 5. 1 was a ^a*partaker* of the *glory* which was
 revealed: And of his *Gospel*, that it
 1 Pet. 1. 5. was ^b*revealed* from Heaven.

1 Joh. 1. 3. *S. John* declares that he had ^c*κοινωσται*
 with the *Father* and the *Son*; as for
 his other writings, that they con-
 tained the things ^dwhich he had
 1 Joh. 1. 1. heard and seen with his eyes, which
 he had looked on, and his hands had
 handled of the Word of life.

As for the *Apocalypse*, he professes,
 1 Apoc. 1. that being in the *Spirit* in the *Isle* of
 9, 10: *Patmos* he received it, and was com-
 1 Ib. 19. manded to *write* it in a Book.

The greatest writer among the Apo-
 stles was *S. Paul*, and the greatest *Que-*
stion hath always been (amongst Un-
 believers) concerning his *Calling* and
 the *Authority* of his *Gospel*.

He *knew this very well*, and there-
 fore we find him asserting both his
Calling and his *Gospel* with abundant
 care and diligence.

He *affirms* himself to have been

an

an Apostle not^a of man, neither by^a Gal. 1. 1. man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father; That by^b God himself he^b Rom. 1. 1. was separated to preach, constituted^c Tim. 1. 11 a Preacher, an Apostle, and a Defen- Phil. 1. 17. der of the Gospel. As concerning his Gospel, he professes to have^c re- Eph. 3. 1. ceived it by Revelation of God.

*As for the Spirit wherewith he wrote and preached, he professed himself^d ready to give a proof of Christ^d 2 Cor. 13. speaking in him. He appealed to the 3. Prophetick Spirit then in the Church, ^e 1 Cor. 14. * If any man think himself a Prophet or 37. Spiritual, let him acknowledge the things which I write to be the Commandments of God.*

Out of this assurance it was that he enjoined his Epistles to be read in the Churches of^f Coloss, ^g Laodicea, ^h Ibid. ⁱ Thessalonica, and ^j excommunicates^k 2 Thef. such as should be disobedient in that 3. 14. particular.

And lest any one should here repeat the Objection made against our Saviour, Thou bearest witness of thy self, thy witness is not true.

S. Paul speaking of *all the Apostles*,
 Eph 4.11 affirms that *God had* ^a *set them in the*
 1 S. 5: *Church*, and that ^b *the Mystery of the*
Gospel was revealed to the holy Apo-
stles by the Spirit.

Particularly, notwithstanding that
 dispute betwixt S. Peter and S. Paul
 * Porphyr. (from the * first Ages of the Church
 Hier. Pro- to our own Times, objected by Un-
 æm. Galat. believers to the prejudice of Religi-
 on) it is remarkable, that, in the same
 place where S. Paul gives an account
 how ^c Peter was to be blamed, and
 how and wherefore he withstood him to
 his face at Antioch, he doth expressly
 affirm, that the Gospel of the Circumci-
 sion was committed to Peter, and that
 God wrought effectually in Peter to
 the Apostleship of the Circumcision.

On the other side S. Peter, in that
 very place, where he may seem to
 2 Pet. 3.15 complain of the ^d *Δυσνόητα* of S. Paul,
 yet even there he owns him as his be-
 loved Brother, acknowledges his Wis-
 dom to have been given him of God,
 and numbers all his Epistles, inter
 τὰς λοιπὰς γραφάς, amongst the other
 Scriptures.

3. Lastly,

3. *Lastly*, for such as would put a difference of *degrees* betwixt the Authority of the *words of Christ*, and the *writings and Sermons of the Apostles*, they may take notice, that the *Authority of these*, resolves it self into the *veracity of Christ himself*.

He it was who being to leave the World, promised his Disciples again and again, that he would ^a send down ^a Joh. 15. 26. upon them the *Holy Spirit*, that should ^b instruct them and teach them ^b 14. 26. all things, that should ^c Lead them into ^c 16. 13. all truth, ^d Bring to their remembrance ^d 14. 26. all things which he himself had spoken, that should ^e shew them things to ^e 16. 13. come, that with this Spirit they should not be lightly dash'd, or sprinkled, but that they should be ^f Baptized, and ^f A. 8. L. 5. as it were plunged into it.

How all these *Promises* were performed, and how the *Affertions* of the Divine Authority of the Words of Christ, and the Apostles were proved to be true, I am next to shew. In the interim I conclude, that supposing the truth of the words of Christ and his Apostles, they are to be esteemed of Divine Authority.

III. The third Opinion is of such as *pretend* to believe *matters of fact* to have been *truly related* in the *New Testament*, but they do not believe the *truth of the Doctrinal* parts relating to *Faith* or *Manners*.

Of these there have always been *too great a number*, not only *pretenders*, who under a *form* of Christianity deny the *power* thereof, but *generally* all sorts of *Hereticks*. When *Porphyrius* had revolted from *Christianity* to *Platonism*, and had bent all his Forces against the *Scripture-History*, he was *refuted* not only by *Lactantius*, and *Methodius*, men Orthodox in Doctrine, but by *Eusebius* and *Apollinaris*; and of late days, *Socinus* and others have well asserted the *truth of the Scripture-History* who yet have been *offended* at the *dogmatical* parts of the *Gospel*, and concerning the *Faith* have made *shipwreck*.

In Opposition to *these* I shall endeavour to demonstrate, that, *supposing Matters of Fact to be truly related* in the *New Testament*, it is *unreasonable*

ble to suspect the *truth* of *any* of the *Doctrines* delivered by *Christ* or his *Apostles*.

Amongst the various fancies concerning *Religion*, wherewith the whole *world* hath been always embroiled: *Two things* there are wherein all the *Sons of Adam* have agreed; namely, 1. *That* that is to be *believed* which hath received the *testimony* of *God*. And 2. *That* this *testimony* is to be gathered from instances of supernatural *Wisdom* and *Power*.

In the *study* of *natural* and *Philosophical Theologie*, the *speculativi* amongst the *Greeks* and *Romans*, and other *Nations*, sought after *Wisdom*, (*Reason*, and *Demonstration*. But) to reduce the *People* to the forms of *religious Rites* and *Sacrifices* prescribed them, they were made to believe the *Epiphanies* of the *Gods*, and the manifestations of their *Wisdom*, and *Power*, by *Oracles* and *Works supernatural*.

To these even *Mahomet* pretended though his great *Argument* was from
the

the Sword : and of the *Jews* I need not speak.

For a *Foundation* of Religion, and in our *inquisition* after that, short of this *Testimony* we ought not to stay; further we cannot go: And herein is the utmost of humane wisdom to consider well those *Evidences* upon which we adventure the interest of our eternity.

To this evidence therefore we appeal in asserting the *Doctrine* of our Lord *Christ*, and his *Apostles*; Namely to the instances of *Supernatural Knowledge* and *Supernatural Power*, whereby their *Doctrine* was attested.

I shall not here wave the force, but I shall decline the repetition of what I have formerly spoken concerning the attestations given to it by *Visible Signs*, *Audible Voices*, *Apparitions of Angels*, *Fulfilling the Prophecies*, *Evidences of Christs Resurrection*, *Mission of the Holy Ghost*.

In *Joh. 7. 15.* the *Jews* wondered at *Christ* that he knew any thing: How knoweth

knoweth this man *Letters*, seeing he never learned them? *but* if we *mark* the *Scriptures*, we shall *find* that he *knew* all things, and that *nothing* was withdrawn from the reach of his understanding.

He *knew* the *sickness* and *death* of *Lazarus*, though *absent* and at a distance; He saw *Nathaniel* under the *Fig-tree*, and convinced him that he was the Son of God, and the King of *Israel*: *Come see a man* (said the *Woman* of *Samaria*) which told me all things that ever I did, *is not this the Christ*? ^a Joh. 11. 11.
^b 4. 17.
^c Joh. 4. 29

He was *Kαθ' ἑωρα*: The secret *d* ^a Joh. 6. 61
64. murmurs at his hard sayings, the inward *e* desires to ask him *Questions*; ^e 16. 19. the *f* Reasonings and *Dialogisms* of the *g* ^f Luk. 9. 47
^g Mar. 12. 15, 25. hearts of his Disciples; & the secret *h* ^h Mar. 2. 8.
ⁱ Luk. 6. 8. Councils of the Scribes and Pharisees, *i* ^k Luk. 11. 17. their evil surmisings, *k* their treacherous intentions to intrap him, *l* their *mental Blasphemy*, were all naked and manifest before him.

He *knew* what was in man, and *l* ^l Joh. 2. 24
25. needed not that any one should tell him;

him; ^a *He knew* the various *Kinds* of
^{21.} *Devils*, and how they were to be e-
^{Mat. 17. 21} *jected*: *This Kind* cometh not out
^{Mat. 17. 27} but by Prayer and Fasting. *He knew*
the *Fishes* of the Sea, and *where* they
were, and *what* was *in* them.

He knew not only things *past* and
^a *Joh. 18. 4* *present*, but *to come*; ^b *He foresaw all*
^{11. 11.} *things* that were to come upon him,
^{13. 11.} *who it was* that should betray him,
^a *Mat. 20.* he foretold his Disciples *all the* cir-
^{18.} cumstances of his *Passion*, ^a *how* he
^a *Mar. 10.* was to be *Betrayed*, ^c *Condemned*, ^d *de-*
^{23.} *livered* to the Gentiles, ^e *mocked*,
^f *Mat. 16.* *scourged*, *spit on*, *kill'd* and *Cru-*
^{21.} *cified* at *Jerusalem*.
^a *Joh. 14.* ^{28.}

Behold, saith he, *I tell you before*;
^a *Luk. 19.* ^b *Let this saying sink into your hearts.*
^{44.} ⁱ *Mat. 26.* He *forewarned* *Peter* of his *denial*,
^{34.} ^k and the *Disciples* of their *flight*.
^{31.}

^l *He foretold* things to come *after*
ⁱ *Luk. 21.* *his death*, the *time* and *manner* of the
^{20.} destruction of *Jerusalem*: The *success*
of his *Gospel*, the *Effect* (unlikely) of
^a *Joh. 12.* his *Crucifixion*, ^m that it should draw
^{32.} all men after him, ⁿ that it should be
^a *Mat. 24.* *preached* and *believed* in the whole
^{14.} world

world ^a spreading it self like *Leaven*, ^a Mat. 13.
 and like a *grain* of *Mustard-seed*, ^{31.}
^b that *Satans* Kingdom should be de- ^b Luk. 10.
 stroyed suddenly like *lightning*; not- ^{18.}
 withstanding the ^c *false Christs* and ^c Mat. 24.
false Prophets which should arise. ^{25.}

These and many more were instances of the supernatural knowledge of Christ: And for his power, the time would fail me to insist upon the many and various instances mentioned in the Gospels.

I shall omit the exercise of his dominion over the Sun, Moon, and Stars, Plants, and Animals, Earth, and Water, the Wind and the Sea, and briefly mind you of those which concerned the bodies of men; how he
 1. Fed their hunger, 2. Healed their distempers, 3. Raised their dead, and ^a Mat. 14.
 4. Cast out Devils. ^{19.}

He fed ^a 4000 at one time, and ^b 15-36.
^b 5000 at another, with 5 or 7 Loaves, ^c Mat. 15.
 and a few little Fishes. ^{30.}
^{9.} 27.
^{4.} 23.

He healed the ^c blind, ^d lame, ^e deaf, ^h Mat. 8. 14
^f dumb, ^g maimed, ^h feverish, ⁱ hydro- ⁱ Mar. 14. 4
^k paralytic, ^l leprosy, and ^m luna- ^k Mat. 4. 13
 tick ^l Mar. 17.
^m Mat. 4. 23

^a Luk. 22. ^{51.} *sick* persons. He *cured* not ^a *green* wounds only, but ancient inveterate ^b *Maladies* of ^b 12, of ^c 38 years continuance, *one* that was *born blind*.

He *used* no *Plasters* nor *Potions*, no *Telefmans* or other *Charms*, but performed all these things by a ^d *touch* of his *Hand* or of his ^e *Garment*. He ^f *healed* ^f *absent* persons as well as *present*, ^g *he spoke* the word only and they were *healed*.

He *raised to life* the Daughter of ^h *Jayrus*, the ⁱ *Widows* Son at *Naim*, his Friend ^k *Lazarus*, and ^l *many* bodies of the *Saints*. Many of which ^{52.} *healed* and *raised* persons lived till about *Trajan's* time, as *Quadratus* a Disciple of the Apostles affirmed in ^{3. 37.} his *Apology* to *Hadrian* the Emperor.

Like a *strong man armed* he cast out Devils, whatever *kind* they were of he quickly dislodged them; ^m that *foaming* and *tearing* Devil which withstood the power of his *Disciples*, and *threw* down and *tore* the possessed person, even as he was *yet coming*

coming to Christ himself; he presently rebuked, and healed the child, and delivered him to his Father.

Neither their long possession, nor their numbers could secure them, he cast ^a seven at once out of Mary Magdalen, and an ^b whole Legion out of a certain man of the Country of the Gadarens, who had been possessed by them a long time.

Moreover, for attestation to the truth of his Gospel, he delegated all this power to others, to the ^c 12 Apostles, to the ^d 70 Disciples: ^e He bequeathed it to Believers at his death, and they also received and exercised this supernatural power.

I have given a few instances of the Supernatural Wisdom and Power of Christ solitarily considered: The History of the Gospel affords us many Examples wherein they were gloriously combined.

By his Knowledge ^f he foretold his Resurrection, he ^g performed it by his Power. By his Divine Understanding he ^h foresaw his Ascension, and by the

^a Mar. 16.9

^b Luk. 8.29

^c Mar. 10.17

^d Luk. 9.3.

^e Luk. 10.

^f I.--9.

^g Mar. 16.17.

^h 17.

^f Mar. 16.

^g 21.

^h Mat. 28.2.

ⁱ Joh. 16.

^j 16, 28.

^k 20.17.

! Luk. 24. the Power of his Divinity he
57. ascended.

He^a ascended, and by his Power he fulfilled the Predictions and Promises
! Act. 2. 4. which he had made. He^b sent down the Holy Spirit, and shed forth the gifts of supernatural Wisdom and Power upon his Apostles.

Not to mention the Apparition of
! Acts 9. Angels, and of Christ himself, the^b
! Acts 10. Bath. Kol. the^c Extasies, ^d Dreams,
10. Bath. Kol. the^c Extasies, ^d Dreams,
22. 17. Visions, and ^e Impulses which were
! Acts 16. 9 given them for their own assurance:
! 16. 6, 7. That they might be enabled to preach the Gospel to all Nations, and deliver to the world those Scriptures whereof we are speaking, they had^f the word
! Cor. 12. 9 of Knowledge and of Wisdom and of Faith, and the gift of divers Tongues, and interpretation of Tongues bestowed upon them.

And to justify their Doctrine to the Ages present and to come, they had the Gifts of Propheſie, and of Healing, and of Miracles.

! Ap. 4. 1. ⁱ John (the beloved Disciple) heard a voice as it were of a Trumpet, talking with him, which said, Come up hither,

hither; and I will shew thee *things which shall be hereafter*; and immediately he was in the *Spirit*, and received the *Revelation*.

• *Paul an Apostle* (though born out of due time) came to Visions and Revelations, he *twice foretold* what should *happen* to the *Ship* where-in he was carried *Prisoner* to *Rome*. He foretold the *Apostacy* of the *later times*, the *rising* of *Antichrist*, *the perillous times* which should come upon the world in the last days. *Agabus* a *Believer* at large foretold the *Famine* which was to come upon all the world, and the binding of *Paul* at *Jerusalem*, &c.

But the *Instances* of *supernatural Power* exercised in *healing* of *Diseases*, *raising* the *dead*, *confounding* the *Opposers* of their *Doctrine*, and in several other kinds by the *Apostles*, and their *Companions* and *Adherents*, the *Preachers* and *Writers* of the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel*, are so abundantly delivered in the *New Testament*, that I shall not offer at particulars.

In the 4. of the Acts we find all the Apostles praying ἱκετεύοντες, that God would stretch forth his hand to heal, & that signs and wonders might be done by the Name of his holy Child Jesus. And immediately the place was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and with Power.

The particular *Miracles* of particular persons are recorded. In *one* word, they *went* and *preached* every *where* the Doctrines which are written in the Gospel; the *Lord* *working with them*, and *confirming their words* by *mighty signs and wonders*, and *gifts of the Holy Ghost*.

This is the state of the matter of Fact, as it is propounded in the *New Testament*: I conclude therefore, that, *supposing* matters of *Fact* to be *truly delivered* in the *New Testament*, there *is no reason* to doubt of the *Doctrines* delivered by *Christ* or his *Apostles*, relating to *faith* or *manners*. And I come to the consideration of the *last* and *extreme Opinion* of the *Anti-scripturists*.

IV. *The*

IV. *The last Opinion, is of those who deny the truth of the Relation of matters of Fact delivered in the New Testament, and in consequence reject the whole body of the Scriptures.*

I could wish there were no such as these, and that what I have yet to say were altogether needless for that reason.

But what means then the publick Rumors which we hear? and whence is an Opinion gone into the world, that some great Philosophers and men of generous reason are dissatisfied concerning the truth of Scripture, and believe the Authority of it to be wholly derived from the Magistrate.

In reference to these I shall endeavour,

1. *Briefly, to shew that the ground upon which these Wisemen and Philosophers reject the Scriptures, is contrary to the Reason of mankind.*

2. *To evince, that the belief of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures is most agreeable to Reason.*

Against the

I. *As for the Argument* and ground of those (amongst us Christians) that reject the *body of the Scriptures*, I do not remember to have heard of other than this.

They have often called upon Believers, Pastors perhaps, or Doctors in the Church, for a clear and undeniable evidence of the truth of the story of the Gospel, and they have not afforded it: therefore they conclude, the Scriptures are to be rejected.

But is this the reasoning of generous Wits? and men of mighty deeds in Disputation, of men pretending to the depths of Reason and Philosophy?

To give a man a clear and undeniable evidence of any thing, there are but two ways, viz. To convince either his senses or his Understanding; the former whereof is to be done by Experiment, the later by Demonstration.

Would they have now an Experiment whether such or such a thing were done 16 or 1700 years ago? Would they have a demonstration of parti-

particulars, in their nature indifferent to be done or not to be done, depending upon the liberty of Causes?

Well were it for the world, if these Beaux Esprits would have the patience, and endure the fatigue of acquainting themselves with the ways of knowledge (Experiment and Demonstration) it would not then be troubled with the dangerous Impertinency of such Pretenders.

*Then these men would not call for Experiment in a subject incapable of it, and (being instructed that Demonstration is only of Universal Propositions in *materia necessaria*, whose contrary Positions imply a contradiction) they would know, that to demand this kind of evidence of the truth of the story of the Gospel, is to be absurdly injudicious, and to act contrary to the Reason of mankind.*

For seeing we may not with civility suppose this principle to be advanced only for the destruction of Religion, and the ruine (or at least undeniable hazard) of the

Souls of men; *We ought to believe that these Philosophers intend this as a general Maxim; "that (in matters "at least of moment) men ought not to "adventure to act, but upon clear and "undeniable evidence, and (speaking "properly) that wise men ought to believe nothing at all. Wherefore let us suppose this for a general principle, and consider what will follow.*

Setting aside the knowledge of the Affections of a few Lines and Numbers, is not all learning to be cast away? Must not the Civil World of mankind be brought to swift confusion? must not mankind it self, in a few days come to an end?

Suppose a Subject should not yield his Obedience, or a Tenant his Rent, till Titles be made out by Experiment or Demonstration. Suppose the Husband-man and the Merchant, the Artificer, the Souldier, the Banker, and the Judge should not adventure, but stay for the assurance of Experiment or Demonstration, would not the whole world be confounded?

*Arist. polit.
l. 7. c. 8.*

suppose

Suppose men should not *marry*, nor take *Physick*, nor *eat* or *drink* till they should have *clear* and *undeniable* evidence, that all these things are what they suppose, and shall *succeed* according to *expectation*, would not *mankind* quickly be *spent*, and brought to an end?

If the management of all humane concernments, *Political*, *Oeconomical*, *Personal*, proceed upon the grounds of *Belief* and *Hope*, and rational (but not demonstrative) inference. If *neither these Philosophers* (if they would consider) nor *any other Person*, either ever did, or possibly could, perform *any one action*, upon such evidence, as these men require concerning the *truth* of the *stories* of the *Scripture*; then to reject them for want of *such evidence*, is repugnant to the Reason of mankind.

I proceed therefore to my *second assertion*, that the *Belief* of the *Divine Authority* of the *Scriptures* is most agreeable to reason.

That the *Divine Authority* of all the

Scriptures of the *Old* and *New Testament*, are *undeniably concluded* from supposition of the *truth* of the *Relation* or *History* of matters of *fact* in the *New Testament*, I have already shewn. And that the *rejection* of all *History* is *against* the *Reason* of mankind is evident, because all mankind receive some *History* or other: wherefore I shall briefly shew,

1. That the *History* of the *New Testament* hath all those *advantages* whereof *any History* is *capable*.

2. That it hath *greater* advantages than any other *History*.

1. The Arguments inducing men to the belief of any historical Relation, are all of them

Either { *Ab intra, Internal*, from the 1. *Credibility* and *Scibility* of the Object. 2. The *Knowledge* and *Integrity* of the Writers. 3. The *way* and *manner* of writing.
 { *Ab extra, External*, The 1. *Reception* of it in the world. 2. *Concurrent* testimonies of *strangers*. 3. The *Concessions* of *Adversaries*, and the like.

In

In *all* which particulars, *no History* in the *world* can justly pretend any advantage above that of the New Testament.

I. For the Credibility, Object, and Cognoscibility of it.

I. To say that instances of *super-ob. sol.* natural Power and Wisdom are impossible, is to deny the power of God and his providence in governing the world: And to say that such things are incredible, as are and have been actually believed, in all times, and by all sorts of persons, Jews and Gentiles, Christians and Mahometans (a few Atheistical persons only excepted) is an absurdity.

The History that we speak of, pretends to no Intrigues or Cabalistical Counsels, or Mysteries of State, but contains it self within the limits of things Visible and Audible, things that were done or spoken; so that *no History* can have advantage over it, respectu Objecti.

2. As for Knowledge in the deliverers, I shall shew it by a brief Induction.

The

The whole *New Testament* consists of the Books of the *Revelation*, *Epistles*, *Acts of the Apostles*, and the *Gospels*.

The *Authors* of the *Epistles* and the *Revelation*, in the *Narrative parts* of them, deliver the things *done* or *spoken to* or *by themselves*, and could not be ignorant of their own *experiences*.

The *Book* of the *Acts* contains some things *done by* or *to the rest* of the *Apostles*, but chiefly the *concernments* of *Paul*; and it was written by *Luke*, who was an *individual Companion* of *Paul*, and *intimately conversant* with the *rest* of the *Apostles*.

For the things *Related* in the *Gospel* of *S. Luke*, he saith they were *delivered* to him by *those* who from the *beginning* were *Eye-witnesses* of the *works*, and *Ministers* of the *Word*, and *his History* agrees with the *other Evangelists*.

The *Gospel* of *S. Mark* hath *nothing* which is not in *S. Matthew* or *S. John*, and was *dictated* by *S. Peter*, the *Head* of the *Apostles*.

S. Matthew was an *Apostle*, and *S. John*

John the Bosom Apostle of Christ. The Apostles were chosen by him for Witnesses of his Words and Actions, they were with him from the beginning of his Ministry, continued with him till his death, conversed with him till his Ascension; That which they had heard, which they had seen with their Eyes, which they had looked on, which their hands had handled of the word of life, that they delivered in writing to the World: And more than this no Writer or Relater of History can pretend to.

2. For Arguments of their sincerity, they have left ^aPrecepts of Veracity, and ^bprohibitions of lying, under pain of Hell torments, the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone: ^aCor. 5. 8. 6. 4. 8. Phil. 4. 8. ^bJam 3. 14 Eph. 4. 25. Apoc. 21. 8. 27. They have ^cprotested that they did not follow cunningly devised Fables; that ^c2Pet. 1. 16 2Cor. 2. 17 they did things sincerely as in the sight of God.

They have appealed to the searcher of hearts: The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ knoweth that I lie not. The things which I write unto you, behold, before God I lie not, Gal. 1. 20. saith S. Paul. They

1Thes.2.3. They have left behind them various instances of their simplicity and godly sincerity in representing their failings to the world, and of candour and ingenuity in distinguishing the dictates of their own Reason from the inspirations of the Holy Spirit: I speak by permission, not by commandment of the Lord: This say I, not the Lord; Thus it is according to my judgment, &c. 1 Cor. 7.

But besides all this, let the matter be estimated according to common reason: If these men did devise a Fable and impose it upon the world, what end could they propound to themselves in so doing? was there any profit in being destitute of all things? or pleasure in being persecuted, afflicted, and tormented? or honour in being counted Fools and Madmen.

Before they began to publish the Stories whereof we speak; their Master was gone, and all worldly hopes were gone away with him: If they were not bound in Conscience, and in Spirit,

rit; what *obligation* had he laid upon them to *labour* and *suffer* for his *honour* as they did?

To omit the severity of his behaviour to them, *He called* them off from their *Vocations*, *Peter*, and *Andrew*, *James*, and *John* from their *Fishing*, *Matthew* from his *Customers* place, the rest accordingly. Mat. 9. 9.

They *forsook* their *Nets*, their *Ships*, their *Relations*, and all their *interests*, and followed him. Mat. 4. 20. 22.

And this they did (*clearly* and *plainly*) believing that he was to be a *Great Temporal Prince*, and in hopes of *Preferment* under him. In this Expectation they continued to the last minute of his conversation with them upon Earth, and he permitted them so to do.

Their last words to him were delivered in this question, *Lord wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom unto Israel?* A. 1. 6. Of the *thing* it self they never doubted, they *only* desire to be *informed* of the *time*,

Now after so long expectation? Consider his Answer. His

His Answer was this, It is not for you to know the times, &c. but ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses of me unto the utmost parts of the earth; and immediately he vanished away.

Was this an answer to their Question? or a satisfaction to their expectation? Was this an Obligation laid upon them? If he had not sent down the Holy Ghost, this would have moved them indeed, but it would have been to rage and indignation; this would have obliged them indeed, but it would have been to detest and abhor the name and memory of him that had abused them. But for the honour of his name, not their own, they did and suffered all things, and gloried in it. An irrefragable argument of their sincerity in the things which they delivered.

3. Of the internal Arguments for the belief of History, there remains only the Consideration of the way and manner of writing.

Histories then carry their own credentials

dentials in them, when the *principal* parts of them are *delivered* with such *circumstances* of *times*, *places*, and *persons*, as may render them liable to *Examination*, and *Refutation*, if they contain any *falsehood* in them.

And in this particular, no *History* hath any *advantage* over that *History* whereof we are *speaking*, as will be *evident* to him that considers it *thoroughout*.

Concerning *John* the *Baptist*, it is recorded, that he was born some few Months before *Christ*, that his *Mother* was *Elizabeth*, that his *Father* was *Zachariah*, a *Priest* of the *Course* of *Abia*, that they lived in the *Hill-Country*. Luk. 1. 5.

He began to preach in the 15. of *Tyberius*, *Pilat* being *Governour* of *Judea*, *Herod* *Tetrarch* of *Galilee*, his *Brother Philip* *Tetrarch* of *Iturea*, and of the *Region* of *Trachonitis*, and *Lysanias* *Tetrarch* of *Abilene*. Luk. 3. 1. Punctual and particular.

Soon after this he was *Imprisoned* and *Beheaded* by *Herod*, for *reprehending* him about *Herodias*, all which were matters of *Fact*, very *easy*, if *false*, Mat. 14. 3. Vide Joseph. Ant. 18. c. 9. 10. Luk. 2. 1.

false, to have been refuted.

Concerning Christ, his birth is stated to have been at a time the *most remarkable* that ever was, when the *whole world* was *taxed* by *Augustus*, in the *days* of *Herod*, when *Cyrenius* was *Governour* of *Syria*; the place *easie* to be enquired of, it was in a Manger, in an *Inne*, in a *Town* that was a little one among the *thousands* of *Juda*, *easie* to be examined.

When he was *about* 30 years old, he was Baptized of *John*, & within a few *days* after he called his *Apostles*; and in less than *four years* space he performed all his *mighty Works*, whereof I shall mention only some few particulars.

At *Cana* in *Galilee* he turned *Water* into *Wine*, at a *Wedding*, where was much company. He *raised* the *Daughter* of *Jayrus*, the *Ruler* of the *Synagogue*, there was but one in that place, she was his *only Daughter*, and *about* 12 years Old. He *healed* the *Servant* of that *Centurion* that had built a *Synagogue*. Can any thing be more particular?

At *Bethany*, 15 *Furlongs* from *Jerusalem*,

Jerusalem, a few days before his death, he raised *Lazarus* after he had been dead *four days*. Could any thing be more *examinable*?

His death was at *Jerusalem*, at the time of the *Passover*, a time of greatest annual *concourse* in the *world*, and then it is said, that the *Sun* was *darkened*, the *Veil* rent, the *Rocks* torn a-pieces, the *Graves* opened. Can any thing be more *refutable* than these things, if they had been false?

So likewise for the *Apostles*. The healing of *Aeneas* at *Lydda*, raising of *Dorcas* at *Joppe*, the passages with *Cornelius* Captain of the Band called the *Italian Band* at *Cæsarea*, and many other acts of *Peter*. The *incorpation* of *Barjesus* at *Paphos*, in the presence of *Sergius Paulus* the *Governour*. The healing of a *Cripple* at *Lystra*, in the presence of the *Priest* of *Jupiter*, besides many other acts of *Paul*, and the rest of the *Apostles*, are so circumstantiated in the *History*, that if false they might have been very easily contradicted.

Acts 9. 33.

40.

10. 1.

13. 6.

14. 13.

D

But

But *besides* all these, this History contains a *Narration* of things done and said, not only by persons well affected, but by *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate*, and the *Roman Governours*, by the *Pharisees*, the *Scribes*, the *High Priests*, and the *Sanhedrim*; all of them *Enemies* both to the *Historians* and the *History*; and if any of these things had been convicted of falshood, would not the credit of the whole Gospel have (at once) been utterly overthrown?

I conclude therefore, that in respect of internal Arguments for belief, no History hath, or indeed can have any advantage above the History of the New Testament.

2. As for External Arguments, I can but name them. Though the whole world interested themselves against the story (so examinable as you have heard) though the Books were extant, while the memory of things was recent, *Matthew* within seven years, *Mark* within eleven, *Luke* about twenty four, *post mortem Christi*; the *Epistles* of
Peter

Peter and Paul within thirty years, all the rest, *intra unius hominis aetatem*, yet no man could ever convince them of falsehood.

The stories were received by men of the greatest Wisdom, Learning, and Virtue amongst the Greeks and Latines. Many of the hardest passages were attested and confessed by Enemies and Unbelievers.

The Authors owned by Julian: the^a Cyrill c.
^b Miracles confessed by Celsus: the^{10. c. Jul.}
^c checking of the operation of the Devil: ^{Orig. c. C.}
^d by Porphyrius: ^e the Darkness and ^{Euseb.}
^f Earthquake at the death of Christ by ^{Terzio Hi-}
^g Thallus and Phlegon Trallianus: ^{storiarum,}
^h the Crucifixion of Christ (by Pilat under ^{Citat. d. Ju-}
ⁱ Tiberius) by Tacitus: And in one ^{lio Afr. 3.}
^j word, ^{Chronogra-}
^k The entire Volume of the Scri- ^{Orig. c. c. 13.}
^l ptures, the very same which our Church ^{15. 44.}
^m receives (by virtue of the belief of the ^{Annalium.}
ⁿ History of the Gospel) ^o before any ge- ^{Athanas.}
^p neral Council, or the time of Constan- ^{Synops.}
^q tine, without any Convocation of the ^{Const. ad}
^r Clergy, or imperial Edict for that pur- ^{p. p. Nicea,}
^s pose, ^t *was* instinctu quodam Chri- ^{Vide Theo-}
^u stiano, generally received by all Chri- ^{doret. l. 1.}
^v ^{c. 6. Gr-}
^w ^{Lat. Pan.}

stians, and the world made Christians.

In respect of all these Arguments, internal and external, I might have justly said, that the History of the Gospel hath the advantage of any other History; but seeing there are some particulars wherein the advantages are super-eminent, I shall speak a little of that distinctly by it self, and so conclude.

2. These *advantages* I shall reduce
to two heads, *Testimonium* { *Rei.*
 Dei.

I. For the *Testimonium Rei*, consider,

1. *Opposition to*
2. *Prevailing of*

} *the Gospel.*

2. Prevailing of S

i. Never *any* story was so much opposed as the *Books and History* of the *New Testament*, by *Jews and Gentiles*, by the *World* and by the *Devil*.

The *beginnings* and *propagation* of the Gospel was by the Jews *maliciously* and *strenuously* opposed in the *times* of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, and in all *succeeding Generations*.

Leß

Lest all men should believe in Christ Joh. 11. 48
(because of his *Miracles*) the *Rulers*
took counsel to *destroy* him, the *Peo-*
ple cryed out to have him *Cruci-*
fied.

Lest the last error (as they called Mat. 27. 64
it) should be *worse* than the *first*, they
sealed up his *Sepulchre*, and set a *watch*
upon it; and lastly, *suborned* the *Soul-*
diers to say, that his *Disciples* came by
night while they were *sleeping* (how
could they *know* this?) and *stole* him
away.

That the first Miracle wrought by A&S. 4. 6.
Peter and *John* might not *spread* a-
mong the *People*, the *Rulers* and *Elders*
and *Scribes*, *Annas* and *Caiaphas*, and
John and *Alexander*, and all the *Kin-*
dred of the *High Priest*, laid *hands* up-
on them, and put them in *hold*, and
threatned and *commanded* them not
to *speak* at all in the *Name* of *Je-*
sus.

When Stephen had uttered his *testi-* A&S. 7. 57.
mony, the *people* cried with a *loud*
voice, and *stopped* their *Ears*, and
ran upon him with *one accord*, and

cast him out of the City, and stoned him.

Act. 9. 2. Wherever they met with *Believers*,
Men or Women, they *haled* them in-
 to *Prison*, breathing out *threatnings*
 and *slaughter*. Wherever they met
 with the *Preachers*, they *opposed* and
 Act. 13. 45 blasphemed, they *tumultuated*, they
 14. 2. stirred the *Gentiles*, they en-
 13. 50. raged the *chief men* of the *Cities*
 and the *honourable women* against
 them.

The instances of their *malicious op-
 position*, in all *ages* of the *Church*, are
 so many as are not to be *numbred* in
 a few *Minutes*, but would require ma-
 ny *days* only to *name* them.

They first stirred up *Nero* to perse-
 cute the *Christians*, they contrived the
 Ensl. 1. 4. 15. death of *Polycarpus*, they stood by,
 and insulted over the *dying Martyrs*;
 in a word, whoever shall read the *sto-
 ries* of *primitive times*, he will find
 that the *Jews* were generally the *set-
 ters* and *Informers* against the *Martyrs*,
 and the *Brokers* for their *Goods* af-
 ter *Execution*: And the *Histories* of
 our

our own and other Nations will shew us the *height* of their *malice*, and the *continuance* of it.

Now, *beside the little Nation* of the *Jews*, the rest of the *whole world*, when this *History* began to be *published*, and the *Books* written, were *Heathen*, *universally devoted to the Devil*, whom therefore our *Saviour* stiles, the *Prince of this world*.

And now that *seed* which had *depended* betwixt the *seed of the Serpent* and the *seed of the woman* 4000 years, was by the *preaching* and *writing* of these things brought to a *Crisis*.

The *professed* and *declared design* of the *Gospel*, was to drive the *Devil* out of his *Dominion*; *Notwithstanding* the *antiquity* of his *possession*, the *universality* of his *Church*, and the *consent* of all *Nations*, whereby he held his *title*. *Notwithstanding* his *Empire* was supported by *Governours* and *Laws*, and *fortified* by the *Arms* and *actual strength* of all the *world*, he *saw*, that if the *Gospel* were not *sup-*

pressed, a little time would spoil the pride of all his glory, that in a moment he should fall like lightning from Heaven.

That he should be exorcised out of the bodies which he possessed: That his famous Oracles should soon be put to silence: his gorgeous Temples and Images should be torn down, his Mysteries and lying wonders set at nought: That Prayers and Vows would be made to him no more, and he should cease to be celebrated in the Songs of his Poets, and Hymns of his Hierophantæ.

Deut. 7.

That his revelling Festivals would be turned to mourning, no more gifts would be presented, no beasts, nor children, women or men sacrificed upon his Altars.

The Contention was de rerum summa (pro aris & focis) and his rage was kindled accordingly: He summons together all his wiles and stratagems, he musters all his forces, he sounds an Allarm to the world, stirs up young and old, rich and poor, all ages,

ages, sexes, conditions, the people
wise and unwise, the Common Soldiers *Orig. c. c.*
and Commanders, Counsellors and *l. i.*

Judges, Senate and Emperours, by
suppressing these Books, and destroying
the Believers of them, to erase the me-
mory of the Gospel, and abolish it for
ever.

The people were enraged against the
Believers, as against the common Ene-
my of mankind, and *pro solenni suo*,
they slandered them with unthought
of wickedness, they imputed to them
all the calamities of the world: And
required them to death: *Si Tiberis a-*
scendit in mænia---Christianos ad Leo-
nes---

Against these Books, the Learned
employed their Learning, and the
Witty employed their Wit. *Celsus*,
Porphyrus, *Jamblichus*, *Hierocles*, and
other Philosophers, endeavoured to
dispute them out of the world. *Sym-*
machus and *Libanius*, and other Rhe-
tors to declaim them away. *Julian*
and *Lucian* and other *Scoptick wits*,
endeavoured to jeer and droll away
the credit of them. Mean

Mean while the *Senators* and *Lawyers* employ themselves to *destroy* the *Books*, by *stretching* against them the *ancient Laws* against *bringing* in *Foreign Religions*, and against *Magical* and *Fatidical Books*: And to *destroy Books* and *Believers* by *New Laws* made for that purpose, against *Combinations* (*Heteriæ*) *Sacrilege*, *Treason*, the *Law* that none should *buy* or *sell*, or *draw water* without *Thurification* to the *Gods*, and the like.

^b *Plin. Ep.*
10.97.

By force of these they persecute the *Believers*, as *Enemies* to the *Commonwealth*, and *Traytors* to the *Emperour*, as *sacrilegious* persons, and *contemners* of *Religion*.

The people sometimes rising upon them without any *Edict*, sometimes by virtue of *Edicts Imperial* or *Proconsular*.

From the beginning of the *Gospel* to the end of *Dioclesian* and *Maximian*, this was the state of *Believers*.

Their *Scriptures* were forbidden to be read, and required to be burned;
their

their *Oratories* and (*obscure*) *Churches* were pulled in pieces; their *Estates* were plundered and confiscated; their *bodies* were imprisoned and tormented; *Fire* and *Sword*, hot *Iron Chairs* and *Coffins*, *Gridirons*, and *Cauldrons*, *Hooks*, *Stakes*, and *Gibbets*, the *Teeth* of *Lions*, and *Tygers*, &c. were their portion.

It cannot be shewed, that ever any Book or Story met with equal Opposition.

2. Consider then how it prevailed, how quickly and largely, how deeply and effectually, although the Precepts were not contrived to solicit the Affections, nor the Doctrines to court the Reason of men.

At one Sermon of Peter 3000, at another 5000 were converted: Within a few years after the death of Christ we find by S. Peter, that the Gospel was preached throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia; and Paul had planted it from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum: Besides what was done by other Apostles, in the Provinces assigned them at the Council of Jerusalem. Within

Act. 2. 41.

1 Pet. 1. 1.

Act. 15.

Lib. 10:
Epist. 97.

Within 66 years this grane of Mustard seed was become a Tree, Pliny Proconsul of Bithynia (to whom the care of Religion, *ex officio*, did appertain) appointed by Trajan to suppress the Christians, he writes to him, that this Belief was *Longè latèq; diffusa Civitates, Vicos, Agros, impletos Christi cultoribus*.

During the second Century, it had shot out great branches, the boughs of this Tree were stretched out, *Hæsterni sumus & vestra omnia implevimus*.

Adv. Jude- of the World, in quibus omnibus Chri-
65, c. 7, 8. sti nomen regnat, and concludes, *ubiq; porrigitur, creditur, colitur, regnat, adoratur*.

And lastly, During the third (à morte Christi) the Fowls of the air, and Beasts of the field lodged under the shadow of it: The Net drew good and bad to shore; the Roman Emperour and Empire declared themselves Christians, i.e. Believers and Assertors of these Books: So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

It went on conquering and to conquer, not by the Spirit of the Sword, but by the sword of the Spirit; the powers of the Earth, and the gates of Hell could not withstand it; it drove the Devil away with all his Temples, Idols, Oracles, Priests, Sacrifices, Services, like lightning: So fell the Dragon, the old Serpent that deceived the World, he was cast out with all his train.

So fell Lucifer the Son of the morn, his Friends and his Followers lamenting.

How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer the Son of the morning! Desolata Tempia rarissimus Victimarum emptor! Some complain of people forsaking of the Gods, others of the Gods forsaking their Oracles and Temples, and becoming useless to the World: He said I will ascend into Heaven, and exalt my Throne above the Stars, but he was soon brought down to Hell.

For the Gospel like Leaven or Fire from Heaven, seized upon all that stood before it; it leaven'd Cities, Islands, Castles,

Tert. Ap. 37

Castles, Councils, Camps, the Tribes and Decuries, the Palaces, Senate, Pleading-places.

It took possession of the Learned, and the Wise, the greatest and noblest Wits of the Eastern and Western Nations: It raised up Philosophers to confound the Philosophy, and noble Orators to confound the Rhetorick where-with it was opposed.

Against *Celsus* it excited *Origen*, against *Porphyrie*, *Apollinaris*, & *Methodius*; against *Porphyrie* and *Hierocles*, *Lactantius* and *Eusebius* (besides what was written *sparſim* by *Jerom*, *Augustine*, *Cyril*, &c.) It set up *Chrysostom* against *Libanius*, *Prudentius* against *Symmachus* and the *Rhetoricians*.

And as it spread it self large and high, so where it took possession, it took a deep possession, Quantum vertice---tantum radice: Those that received it truly, received it in the love thereof, it took possession of their hearts: it penetrated their spirits, and took its lodging in the inmost recesses
of

of the soul. The *Contents* of these *Books* was their most precious Pearl, and they hid it in their heart. The *Books* themselves were their greatest worldly treasure, and rather than they would deliver them to be burned, they chose to suffer the loss of honour, liberty, estate, Wives, and Children, nay even life it self. When Dioclesian required the *Scriptures* that they might be burned, In one Province (*Egypt*) in one Month, 17000 persons chose rather to dye than to deliver them: In Enf. l. 8. c. 3
comparison of these they counted not their lives dear to them; the love of them was stronger than Death, many waters could not quench it, neither could the floods drown it. This was Testimonium Rei, and an advantage above all other Histories; or Writings in the World.

2. Moreover they had Testimonium Dei. Indeed all that is already spoken is an evidence of a Divine assistance: But more particularly, God gave Testimony to these Books, by

1. Their

1. *Their operation upon Believers of them.*

2. *His co-operation with Believers of them.*

1. *The Gospel which they contain,* was the power of God to every true Believer. That which no Institution in Philosophy, nor Initiation in the Mysteries of any of the Gods, was ever able to accomplish, that was every where atchieved by the belief of the Gospel, in a moment. Like a charm from Heaven, it stilled the passions, and mortified the lusts of men. What a Beadroll doth Paul reckon up in the *Corinthians*: But ye are washed (saith he) but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.

Notwithstanding all the calumnies thrown upon Believers, and the prejudice wherewith they were loaded, the unpropitious and relucting world were forcibly convinced that the Believers of these Books were effectually taught to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and

Lact. de fals. sap. l. 3. c. 26.

1 Cor. 6. 9.

and godly in this present world: through the cloud of ignominy where-with they were encompassed, their innocency broke forth as the light, and their just dealing as the noon day; the piety, loyalty, justice, charity, magnanimity, patience, meekness, and purity of Believers of these Books, convinced the unbelieving world, that God was in them of a truth: for they teach as having Authority and Power, and not as the writings of other scribes.

2. But beside the operation of these Books upon the Believers, God was pleased to give testimony to them by his co-operation with them in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds.

The History of the Gospel tells us, that when Christ was even now leaving the world, he left this Legacy to Believers for confirmation of the truth of the Gospel; These signs (said he) shall follow them that believe; In my name they shall cast out Devils; Mar. 16. 17 speak with new tongues; Take up Serpents; If they drink any deadly thing,

it shall not hurt them; They shall lay hands on the Sick, and they shall recover.

Now that this was made good, and that these signs (so long as there was need) were continued among Believers, we have as good assurance as we can have of any thing beyond our own memory or experience.

They have been delivered to us by a Cloud of Witnesses; by men of the greatest Wisdom and Learning in their Generations, by persons of such integrity, that they laid down their lives in testimony of their veracity; delivered not by hear-say, but upon their certain knowledge; delivered in their Disputations with, and Apologies to the Adversaries of Christianity, with a challenge to the examination of the truth, or a conviction of the falshood of them. Instances are very numerous, I shall produce only a very few.

Dial. cum Justin the Martyr (who suffered
Tryphone. Anno 165) affirms to Trypho the Jew, that these supernatural gifts were found in his time among Christians.

Irenaeus

Irenæus an Auditor of Polycarp, who was a Disciple of S. John (suffered circa 206) affirms upon his own knowledge, that the gift of Propheſie was then frequent in the Church, that many had the gift of tongues, *ipsi audivimus*; Others cast out Devils, Others healed Diseases, Others raised the dead; and those raised persons continued many years amongst them, pro certo.

Iren. l. 22.

c. 36.

Euf. b. 3. c. 7

item c. 20.

Tertullian in his *Apologetica adversus Gentes*, affirms that *Jam de vobis Demonas ejiciunt*.

Origen against *Celsus*, saith, that he himself had seen by invocation of God, and the Name of Jesus very many that were delivered from grievous maladies, *ἀν' ἰσχύος* (alienatione mentis) *ἡναιὼν καὶ ἄλλων μυρίων.*

L. 3.

Not to mention others, S. *Augustine* in his *Book de Civitate Dei* (begun about 410, but many years in writing) l. 22. c. 8. gives an account of very many Miracles done at Hippo, Carthage, and other places, of no great distance, noting times, places, persons,

occasions, appealing to the Country, delivering them under terms of the greatest assurance; Scio ego; cognosco ego; nos interfuimus, & oculis nostris aspeximus: And in his Retractations, Ea quæ cognoscimus neq; referre neq; enumerare possumus.

Other Histories and Writings, and the Authors and Believers of them can pretend no higher than to the testimony of men, these have the testimony of God also: If we believe the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. I conclude therefore, that there is greater Reason to believe the History of the New Testament than any other History in the world.

The sum of all is this, The Divine Authority of the Scriptures is the great fundamental and comprehensive Principle of Christianity, which being admitted it stands, and being removed it presently falls to the ground.

Against this therefore the great Enemy of Religion in these later days (under pretence of Reason and Philosophy) directs his Forces, and is said to

to have found a success very pernicious and deplorable.

I humbly conceive that the *Resolution* of the belief of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures into the Decrees of Popes, or Determinations of Councils with those who call themselves Roman-Catholicks, into private impulses and dictates of the Spirit with the Enthusiasts, and into the Laws and Edicts of Princes and Magistrates with our new pretenders to Reason and Philosophy, is that engine whereby the Devil hath prevailed to scandalize the world and cast it into Antiscriptural infidelity.

It is for this cause that I have conceived it requisite (after many others who have done worthily) to have recourse (once more) to the Original Reason of things, and the common grounds whereupon mankind doth proceed in matters of this nature. *Vide Philosoph. Essay.*

Where (hoping that I have escaped the absurdity of begging the matter in Question, discoursing in a circle, and the inconveniences of some other methods)

thods) I have endeavoured to demonstrate: That supposing the truth of the New Testament, both 1. The Old Testament, and 2. The New Testament are to be received as of Divine Authority.

3. And supposing matters of fact to be truly related, the Doctrinal parts are to be believed.

4. For the Historical Relation of matters of fact, that there is no ground to disbelieve it.

That for the Reception of it, it hath 1. All the advantages whereof an History is capable.

2. Far greater advantages than any other History.

Wherefore I conclude, that All the Scriptures (i. e. the Canonical Books of the Old Testament and the Books of the New Testament) were given by inspiration of God. Quod erat demonstrandum.

P I N I S.

